

السنة الحادية عشر

Tuesday October 29 1996

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NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR 46,696

Why will no one stop Rupert Murdoch?

The digital dictator

With European weather



Adrian Searle reviews the short-list

The men-only Turner Prize



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Education

Taking the moral high ground in the classroom

G2 pages 10/11

Head closes pupil-row school

'If boy stays I can't guarantee safety'

Donald MacLeod
Education Correspondent

TWO hundred children are unable to attend their school today in the latest confrontation over deteriorating classroom discipline which has set ministers, local authorities, teachers and governors at odds.

A threat by members of the National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers at Manton junior school, near Worksop, Nottinghamshire, to strike over a 10-year-old boy who is accused of attacking other pupils yesterday prompted the headteacher to close the school indefinitely on health and safety grounds. He said he could not guarantee the safety of pupils if the boy attended.

The confrontation has fuelled fears of increasingly chaotic school management and discipline, after a crisis inspection at the Ridings school, Halifax, and a national debate over morality and behaviour following the murder of the London headteacher, Philip Lawrence. Parents are also at odds with a Luton primary teacher who allowed a boy to punish classmates with a ruler after they bullied him. She faces disciplinary action.

Graham Lane, Labour education chairman of the Association of Metropolitan Authorities, said the Manton teachers' action was outrageous. "We cannot have a situation where teachers are the sole arbiters of who they teach. They are setting the most incredible example to young people because they are bullying tactics."

Gillian Shephard, the Education Secretary, the local education authority, teachers' unions and school governors yesterday blamed each other for the failure to relieve the impasse over Matthew Wilson, whose mother insists he should be taught in normal lessons at Manton and not sent to a special school.

When the eight staff voted to strike if the boy returned to

lessons, Fred Riddell, who chairs Nottinghamshire's education committee, intervened and the governors agreed six weeks ago to individual tuition.

The governing body, which has twice overruled the headteacher, Bill Skelley, when he recommended that Matthew be expelled, is to meet tomorrow. The governors have decided he should return to classes, after spending £2,000 on a supply teacher for the boy.

Eileen Bennett, chairwoman of the governors, accompanied Matthew and his mother, Pamela Cliffe, into school yesterday despite a warning from the council. "He has got a legal right to be in that school," she said. "The lad has done magnificently. It was a lot of money but it has been worthwhile. But I do not think it is a good idea to criminalise a 10-year-old by teaching him in isolation. Teachers have got powerful unions but children have nobody to speak up for them."

Matthew's father had died and his mother had been treated for cancer. "They [teachers] have picked on someone they could batter on. Without the governors supporting her she would have been on her knees."

Nigel de Gruchy, general secretary of the union, said Mrs Bennett had been irresponsible in acting as a counsellor for one family and relinquishing her responsibility for the school. "If she wants to play power politics with the youngsters, she has picked the wrong union."

Governors were not capable of running schools successfully, Mr de Gruchy said. "If a school gets into trouble the governing bodies cannot manage, and turn to the local authority for help and support. But authorities no longer have the ability to intervene."

Mrs Shephard called on the county council to intervene but Mr Riddell said it had no legal powers to do so. Under the Government's policy of local management, governors were responsible for spending and excluding pupils.

Parliament's new moral firm, G2, page 10



Matthew Wilson, whose return prompted new strike threats. He is accused of attacking pupils. PHOTOGRAPH: DOUG MARKE

School crisis: What they say

"He has a legal right to be in that school. The lad has done magnificently... I do not think it is a good idea to criminalise a 10-year-old by teaching him in isolation. Teachers have got powerful unions but children have nobody to speak up for them."

Eileen Bennett, chairwoman of governors

"If she wants to play power politics with the youngsters, she has picked the wrong union... Governors are not capable of running schools successfully."

Nigel de Gruchy, teachers' union leader

"This is entirely the responsibility of Nottinghamshire county council. I call on the chair of the education committee to announce how he proposes to ensure that pupils at Manton School get the uninterrupted education to which they are entitled."

Gillian Shephard, Education Secretary



"This is a dispute between the headteacher, who wanted to permanently exclude a child on two occasions, and the governing body... We have no legal rights to be interfering with this school."

Fred Riddell, Nottinghamshire education chairman

"As I am not in a position to guarantee the appropriate health and safety of all the children in the school, I have to tell you that school will be closed tomorrow."

Bill Skelley, head teacher of Manton junior school, in letter to parents

Parties move towards knife ban

Kamal Ahmed, Michael White and Ewan MacAskill

POLITICIANS from all parties were last night moving towards a ban on combat knives, as Michael Howard softened his stance against legislation to outlaw them amid signs that the Labour Party was working on its own proposals.

The Liberal Democrats gave a cautious welcome to an unofficial four-point plan emanating from Labour, with several barristers and police organisations indicating the unpublished document was a good starting point.

The four clauses in the document propose that the suppliers of knives would be required to say what the knives were for; that the selling of knives designed for violence be made an offence; that marketing and advertising of such knives would also be an offence; and that the police should keep a list of prohibited knife designs which suppliers would have to consult. As Labour tried to increase the pressure on the Government by launching a national

The draft proposal

□ That suppliers of all knives shall be required to set out the purposes for which they are designed.

□ That the selling of knives designed for violence shall be an offence (unless permission be granted for supplying such knives for military purposes).

□ That the marketing or advertising of knives and other weapons in a way

which appears to condone or incite violence shall be an offence.

□ That where a supplier or retailer believes the design of a knife is excessive for the purpose described and that an alternative use for the knife is violence, they shall be required to consult the police, who shall maintain a list of designs which are unsuitable for public sale

petition, Mr Howard offered to act immediately if a satisfactory definition of such weapons was available. His stance was in marked contrast to last week when the Government, after two U-turns on paedophiles and stalking, rejected a Labour offer to discuss a knives ban.

In a Queen's Speech debate yesterday, the shadow home secretary, Jack Straw, brandished a copy of Gun Mart and Accessories, advertising combat knives above his head. He said there was a pal-

pable difference between kitchen knives and combat knives, which he said had "no purpose whatever but maiming and killing people, and should be banned".

Mr Howard said he will meet Mr Straw if a workable definition is on the table. The four proposals could be the first step towards that.

The Liberal Democrats gave a qualified welcome to the draft document. "I would certainly react favourably to the first three parts of the draft," said Alex Carlisle, the

Liberal Democrat legal affairs spokesman who is a QC and a part-time judge. "I believe that the parliamentary draughtsmen could turn them into workable legislation."

"Although defining the knives themselves is difficult, their marketing, display and sale is an appropriate target and could produce by agreement very workable legislation," he said.

The fourth proposal, which says that knife designs that are excessive for their intended purpose should be referred to the police, was more difficult to support as it could include a large number of domestic knives which have perfectly innocent uses.

The police have also given their backing to the proposals. "It cannot be beyond the wit of the government and parliament to arrive at a definition of these type of knives," said Jim Fraser, chairman of the Scottish Police Federation. "These knives are available in cities across the country, and although some legislation is there which can be used we are not against expanding that legislation."

Airline jettisons royal tag to avoid conveying a 'negative' image

Mick Varley

BRIITAIN'S biggest holiday airline is dropping the word royal from its in-flight service because it no longer conveys the right image.

The Royal Service, introduced four years ago and featuring red, white and blue livery, will be phased out next year. Britannia Airways said yesterday.

Its public relations chief, Richard Hedges, explained: "We have done some market research and have found that the name 'royal' no longer has the kudos and the positive associations it had when we introduced it on flights in 1992."

Publicised on its launch by pictures of a stewardess serving a Spitting Image likeness of the Prince of Wales, and despite the Princess Royal being a regular customer, it will now go the same way as the television show.

Since 1992 the Royal Family have endured one scandal after another, including both Charles and Diana admitting adultery. Roger Burnell, managing

director of Luton-based Britannia, which carried 8 million passengers last year, told staff of the changes in a letter which said shifts in public opinion had to be acted upon.

Research we have carried out indicates that whilst Britannia's exterior livery is still very strong, it is now the right time to introduce a new on board service brand which recognises changing tastes, fashions and lifestyles," he said.

A Buckingham Palace spokesman said: "This decision is a matter for the company, and it is not something we would comment on."

Harry Greenway, Tory MP for Ealing North, was surprised at the move. "To lose the association with the Queen and the Queen Mother, to mention but two members of the Royal Family, is to lose an advantage beyond price. I cannot believe they can afford to do that," he said.

Many organisations immediately moved to pledge loyalty to the Royal link, including the Royal College of Psychiatrists, which said it was "quite bappy" with its royal charter.

Inside Britain

The selection of David King's first post-colonial governor entered its final phase as 30 people declared their interest.

World News

The Bank of England will shun off the pound's recent hard dis and renew its call for an immediate increase in interest rates.

Finance

Ex-England coach Terry Venables is thought to be interested in the £300,000-a-year job at managerless Blackburn Rovers.

Sport

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Sketch

Howard rattled so the I's have it



Simon Hoggart

THE Home Secretary started badly. "My first priority has always been to protect the public and to create a safer Britain," he plonked. This was met by mocking Labour laughter. It may have put him off his stroke, because when he is ratted Mr Howard's vowels undergo what we phonologists call the "Lianelli Shift", and all turn into the letter L. "Pippie deserve protection," he said. "We wir not lible to come up with a successful definition of a combat knife," he added. The effect is hypnotic. As was his claim that the Government had decided to whip the vote on handguns purely out of concern for the Dubliners parents. "It is our aim to get it on the statute book as quickly as possible so that the pippie of Dublinans can draw a line under it. I do not think a free vote would issist that." This is as if our big-hearted Government had refused to pass strict rules on pension funds, so that the Maxwell victims could forget their experience. The debate descended. The more backbencher protested that they would not make capital out of Dublinans, the more capital they made. Mr Howard gleefully quoted a letter from Peter Mandelson, in which he had assured a constituent that "pippie such as yourself will still be able to own handguns." (Possibly Mr Mandelson, Tony Blair's spin doctor, had been referring only to guns fitted with silencers which, like him, work, you might say, off the record.) Edward Leigh, a Tory who was rightwinging as he said Mr Major dared to sack him, was worried for gun owners. Would they get the full market rate for their weapons? "They will liddid!" said Mr Howard. But what is the market rate for illegal goods?

What they said? What they would fetch in an East End pub? David Mellor suggested that many gun owners thus compensated would go out and buy the still legal .22s, which killed Bobby Kennedy and Yitzhak Shamir. Mr Mellor loathes all weapons, except those which can destroy a city on the other side of the world. He makes a lot of money supporting them. Labour MPs stood up and tried to persuade Mr Howard to frame a law which would ban combat knives. Mr Straw quoted a senior policeman: "If they can get a man on the moon, they can get a definition of a combat knife." (It was reminded of the feminist T-shirt: "If they can get a man on the moon, why not all of them?") He waved an ad. "The Vindicator has no other purpose than maiming and killing," and even from a distance it did not look like the things they give you on planes to eat your food-style lunch. The debate became surrealistic. Dame Elaine Kallit-Brown rose and sat down, rose and sat down, until she looked like the shower scene of Psycho. She began to shout, and all the knives in the cafeteria went blunt. "It is possible to distinguish between a kitchen knife and this!" shouted Mr Straw, banging his picture of the Vindicator. "Of course I would like to ban combat knives," shouted Mr Howard. The Dame rose menacingly behind him. "But we need a satisfactory definition!" Then Dame Elaine began to speak, like Hitchcock's famous screeching violins. "Scree! Scree! Scree!" they go on the soundtrack. "Scratch! Scratch! Scratch!" her voice still echoes in my head. "I happen to be a keen cook! I was the country's Number One housewife!" she boasted. "It would be very difficult to define knives. All it proves is that his wife never let him into her kitchen." A vision of the Dame in her own dream kitchen, viciously attacking a fruit loaf with the Vindicator, floated into my horrified mind. Live Briefs, Steve Bell and Simon Hoggart's satirical look at the political, is published this week by Methuen (£9.99).

Review

Free players show three's company

John Fordham

Tracey/Presencer/Parker Vortex, Stoke Newington. TAN TRACEY, the inimitable English pianist, will be 70 in December, although time appears to be travelling in reverse for him. His look of gothic amusement grows more amiably sardonic by the year. His short tour, which culminated in Appleby, Cumbria, last night, was with a band that will certainly register as one of the memorable ensembles of 1996, and maybe of a longer period than that - particularly if its exploits are recorded. Tracey is playing with trumpeter Gerard Presencer, the regular partner whom he often points out could be his grandson, and with a much more unexpected addition - the free-jazz saxophonist, Evan Parker. The result, equally unexpectedly, makes everybody play better than usual. All three have developed distinctively commanding styles with which they can engage an audience in their sleep. But all three are also occasionally capable of the lipside of their talents, which is to microwave set pieces and recycle them. But on this show everybody listened like hawks and played accordingly - Tracey operating like a rhythm section at the keyboard, with clangs, bumps, tinkling sounds and metallic trills like cymbal patterns; Presencer wrestling out of his next bebop clothes into something fascinatingly looser; and Parker taking his atonal technique much closer to orthodox intonation to

meet the others. Tracey is a textural pianist anyway, who dislikes tricky scale-running, a quality that unites him with Parker. Tracey and Presencer opened their London show, at the Vortex, with conventional jazz, and after a bit of joggling and warming-up, the latter (on Flugelhorn throughout the night) unleashed an astonishingly resourceful solo on Theon's Monk's I Mean You, double-time runs flying over Tracey's interrogatory arpeggios, sly walking bass effects and prodding chords. The pianist then demonstrated exactly why he has been a hero (often an unsung one) of the British jazz scene for half a century in a ballad solo of woodpecker tappings, clustered runs so impacted as to sound liquid, repeated slurs and suddenly whispered descending harmonies that was an object lesson in lateral use of the piano's resources. All three players came together to close the first set and joined again at the end of the second, after Tracey and Parker had delivered a completely entrancing investigation into free improvisation. They oscillated between jazzy melodic conversation and tennis match exchanges of sharply-struck chords and hollow tenor sax exclamations, seamless soprano sax odysseys that bordered uncannily on a kind of abstract Celtic music, and a joint ability to stop on a sixpence that was all but psychic. Presencer joined them and turned out to be as imaginative a free player as Kenny Wheeler in earlier years; an evening jammed with unpremeditatedly thrilling music.

16 British airports 'have no hi-tech baggage security'

Richard Norton-Taylor

THE Department of Transport acknowledged yesterday that nearly half of Britain's airports lack up-to-date baggage screening equipment. A report by David Lord, the department's head of transport security and a former MI5 officer, has found that 16

of the country's 33 airports do not screen all hold baggage. The department says that for security reasons it will not name the airports which have yet to install adequate numbers of machines. These include the CTA 5000 which can detect Semtex. A DOT spokesman said it was up to individual airports to decide what screening equipment to buy.

Hostile £766m deal would put one-third of England's electricity supply into hands of American firms

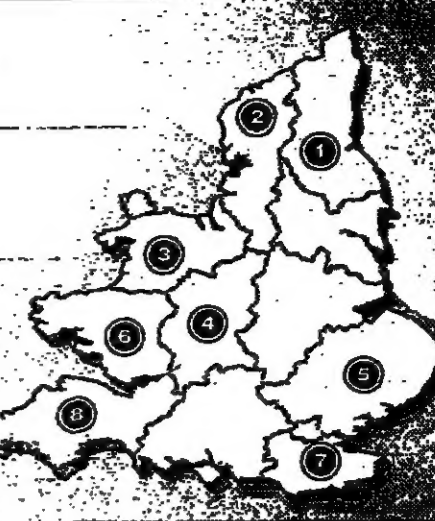
US bid for power company

Chris Barrie Business Correspondent

AN AMERICAN generating company launched a hostile £766 million bid for Northern Electric yesterday, which could leave a third of England's power supply firms in American hands. The bid would offer Northern directors the prospect of windfall gains from share options worth hundreds of thousands of pounds. As Nebraska-based CalEnergy launched its \$30p a share offer for the Newcastle-based company, shares surged in other power companies on the back of City speculation that other overseas bidders are also poised to launch takeovers before the general election. The speculation came despite indications that the Government is taking a tougher line on utility takeovers. Last Friday Ian Lang, the Trade and Industry Secretary, blocked the battle between Severn Trent and Wessex Water to snap up South West Water. Northern rejected the bid, claiming that its board had

British power falls to the Americans

Table listing various power companies and their offers: Northern Electric (80p offer), Eastern Group (£75p offer), Norweb (£1.55 offer), SWALEC (94p offer), Manweb (£1.5 offer), SEEBORD (635p offer), Midlands Electricity (£1.4 offer), and Swab (£65p offer).



been due to meet yesterday morning to consider an informal offer of 700p a share. If successful, CalEnergy, backed by a US construction company called Peter Kiewit Sons' Inc, will become the fourth American group to buy an English regional electricity company. Warning that the bid would

add to uncertainty for Northern's 3,800 employees, Mike Jeram, head of energy at the Union trade union, said: "If this takeover goes ahead it will mean that one-third of England's electricity companies will be owned by Americans." With the Government keen to avoid "fat cat" controversy

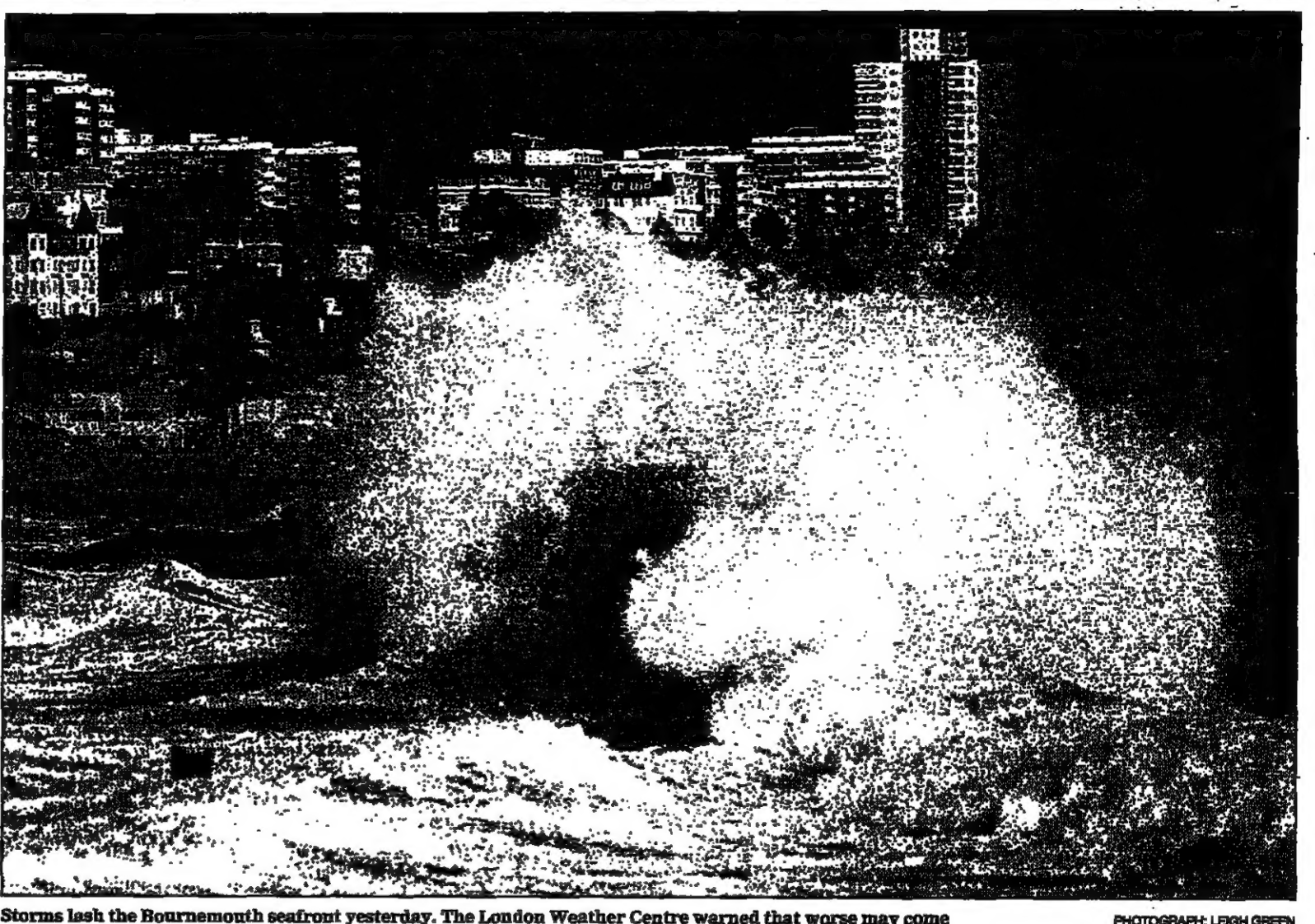
and foreign takeovers in the utilities in the runup to the election, CalEnergy added to the controversy by admitting it had taken into account Labour's plans for a windfall tax in arriving at its valuation for the company. John Battle, shadow energy minister, said companies and the City were already con-

cluding that a windfall tax on utility profits would not damage the industries' strategies. He said: "They are well able to afford to make a contribution to getting 250,000 youngsters back to real work." Mr Battle added that Labour would take steps to ensure US firms could not "salt money away" into other

accounts when it was made from regulated industries such as electricity. CalEnergy's chairman and chief executive, David Sokol, said job prospects for Northern Electric employees should be enhanced by the takeover, which was aimed at building up the group's overseas businesses. Although Northern's 1.5 million consumers across the North-East were to be offered no direct benefit, Mr Sokol said they would do better under CalEnergy's strategy of boosting efficiency and cutting the cost of power. But the bid was opposed by the National Consumer Council, which called on Mr Lang to refer it to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission on the grounds that it appeared to be against the public interest. CalEnergy builds and operates power stations in the US, Indonesia and the Philippines with assets of \$3.5 billion (£2.38 billion). Mr Sokol has pursued an aggressive expansion strategy at the little-known company, raising its market value from \$300 million to \$1.9 billion today. Insider faces battle, page 12

4 die as gales strike

A THREE-year-old boy was orphaned yesterday as four people died in gales which lashed much of the country, writes Nick Worley. Luke Holliday was in the back of a car driven by his father, Paul, near their home near Bradford, West Yorkshire, when a 30ft tree toppled on to it. Mr Holliday, aged 33, and his partner, Elaine Bell, 39, died at the scene. The boy was treated for minor injuries. In Wales two anglers died after being swept out to sea. Coastguards recovered the body of Paul Jones, aged 25, who was swept from a pier at Swansea West Dock on Sunday night. Another fisherman, aged 24, was swept away on Saturday near Ogmere-by-Sea, Mid Glamorgan. Last night forecasters warned that worse may come as winds of more than 50mph were recorded off the Welsh coast. A London Weather Centre spokesman said: "There will be gusts even higher than that running through the valleys and on exposed hilltops and winds will reach 60mph in the north."

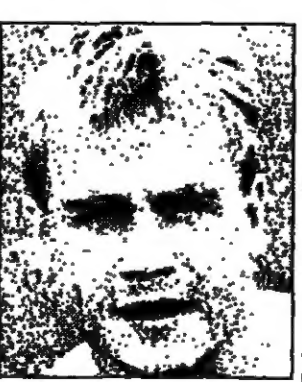


Storms lash the Bournemouth seafont yesterday. The London Weather Centre warned that worse may come PHOTOGRAPH: LEIGH GREEN

Rugby tackle led to death

John Duncan Sports Correspondent

AN OXFORD University rugby player who sustained serious head injuries during a match at the weekend died at the National Hospital for Neurology and Neurosurgery in London, it emerged yesterday. Ian Tucker, aged 23, died after tackling a Saracens player who was scoring a try. "The [Saracens] player was diving over the line and Ian was caught underneath him as the player landed on the ground," said Steve Hill, director of rugby at Oxford University. Tucker's death highlights the fact that rugby is the most dangerous sport in Britain. A Sports Council survey in 1991 found 50 "substantive" injuries per 1,000 occasions of participation. There are up to 12 cases of "catastrophic" injuries in



Ian Tucker... suffered serious head injuries

rugby every year, according to Greg McLatchie, director of the National Sports Medicine Unit. At least 15 British rugby players have died since 1970, although some deaths have been heart-related. The rugby authorities have changed some rules to reduce the risk of serious injury. Mr Tucker, who was born in South Africa, had been tipped to win a place in Oxford's team for the Varsity Match against Cambridge on December 10, having impressed officials after arriving from Sydney University. He had appeared for New South Wales up to under-21 level and he represented Australia under-19s against New Zealand in 1992. There will be a minute's silence for the player before the Australia v Scotland A match on Saturday. "We are very saddened by the news," said Peter Falk, manager of the Australian team. "Some of the players in the squad knew him and played with him." Oxford University will be playing their traditional fixture against Major Stanley's XV tomorrow as planned. "It is the wish of Ian's family that the fixture will take place as planned," a university spokesperson said.

New health scare as Yeltsin cancels meetings

David Hearst in Moscow

DOCTORS treating President Boris Yeltsin yesterday abruptly cancelled his scheduled meetings this week, up to a month before he is due to undergo surgery for a heart bypass. The Kremlin said this would enable him to have a "special regime" of pre-operative tests. But it did not say what the tests were, or set a date for the operation. Sergei Yastrzhembsky, the president's spokesman, said the doctors had ordered complete rest while Mr Yeltsin undergoes the tests and that his meetings with Viktor Chernomyrdin, the prime minister, would be cancelled. "The preparations have

entered their final stage. Everything is proceeding as normal," he said. But it is known that these meetings were still on schedule up to four days ago. Successive visitors to Mr Yeltsin's bedside in his sanatorium, outside Moscow, have commented on his mental agility. These statements helped to persuade a sceptical and feuding political elite that he was still controlling the levers of power. The fact that the meetings have been cancelled could mean either that the tests are more serious than have been admitted, or he is about to have his operation, much sooner than expected. Michael DeBakey, the eminent American cardiologist, was quoted by an Italian

newspaper as saying no complications had been found and the operation would go ahead in the last two weeks of November. "If there are no complications - and I repeat, there are none right now - the operation will take place at the end of November," he told the Rome-based Corriere della Sera yesterday. He said doctors had cured anaemia caused by intestinal haemorrhages. He added that the left ventricle of the heart was the main risk to the operation. However, a month ago, Renat Akchurin, the Russian surgeon heading the operating team, said the contractive function of the heart had improved, reducing the risk of an operation.

Advertisement for General Accident Direct insurance. Features a hand holding a pen, text: "Down goes the cost of your motor and home contents insurance with our no claims discount. Call now for details." Includes contact numbers: 0800 121 000 and 0800 121 004. Website: http://www.ga.co.uk/gadirect

Love-child abandoned to unknown fate



A letter from Einstein to his first wife Mileva (pictured), one of the 55 which are expected to fetch £2 million at auction next month

Letters reveal fickle, sentimental Einstein

John Emsw

ALBERT EINSTEIN'S sentimental but transient feelings for his first wife and their premarital love-child are disclosed in letters to be auctioned in New York next month.

The correspondence, expected to fetch 23 million, shows the great physicist's copious affection for his first child, Lieserl. Yet he and his wife, Mileva, were to abandon her within months to a life which remains unknown. He never referred to her again.

He uses a similar tone with Mileva — and used it again when he became close to his second wife, his cousin Elsa, 10 years later. Lieserl's existence was unknown until scholars found the 55 letters from Mileva in a family archive of 500 papers in a Los Angeles bank vault in 1986. They are being sold by descendants of the couple.

Einstein met Mileva, who was Serbian, as a fellow



Mileva with Eduard, left, and Hans Albert, whom she bore to Einstein (right) after their first child was apparently given up

physics student at Zurich Polytechnic. She helped him substantially with his studies on relativity. They lived together, although Einstein's mother warned of disaster if she became pregnant. Lieserl was born in 1902, when he was 23. Einstein, who was not with her at the time, wrote: "Now you see

that it really is a Lieserl, just as you wished. Is she healthy, and does she cry properly? "What are her eyes like? Which one of us does she more resemble? Who is giving her milk? Is she hungry?" "I love her so much and don't even know her yet!" But when Mileva

returned to Switzerland months after the birth, she came alone. Felix Oyens, a London specialist for auctioneers Christie's, said: "They gave her up, presumably for adoption, although no one is sure." Einstein's last reference to their daughter came in a letter written when Mileva was in Serbia, pregnant

with their second child. "I'm not in the least bit angry that poor Dollie [Mileva] is hatching a new chick," he wrote. "In fact I'm happy about it and had already given some thought to whether I shouldn't see to it that you get a new Lieserl." "I'm very sorry about what has befallen Lieserl.

It's so easy to suffer lasting effects from scarlet fever. As what is the child registered? We must take precautions that problems don't arise for her later.

Since her birth was discovered, Einstein scholars have worked in vain to discover her fate.

Einstein during this time called Mileva "my dear kitten", "my dearest little child" and most frequently "my dear sweetheart". He wrote: "When I am not with you I feel as if I'm not whole.

"I'll be so happy and proud when we live together and can bring our work on relative motion to successful conclusion."

But by 1912 he was telling Elsa he loved her. "I have to have someone to love, otherwise life is miserable. And this someone is you."

When the family moved to Berlin, Mileva hated the city and was rejected by Einstein's mother. In 1917 Elsa moved in to care for him. He later divorced Mileva and married Elsa.

Jack Tinker, perfectly cast critic and friend of British theatre, dies aged 58



Jack Tinker... 'evangelist but no pushover'

Dan Glaister Arts Correspondent

JACK Tinker, the Daily Mail critic and one of the best-known figures in British theatre, died yesterday at the age of 58. It is understood he had a heart attack in hospital after being taken ill with asthma at his Brighton home on Sunday night.

Mr Tinker was the Daily Mail's theatre critic for 25 years, writing daily reviews for page three.

He was born in Oldham, attending Hulme Grammar School for Boys before entering journalism as a reporter

on the Surrey Advertiser. From there he joined the Brighton Evening Argus as a film and theatre critic before moving to the Daily Sketch as a feature writer in 1970. The Mail and the Sketch merged and the following year he became theatre critic on the Daily Mail.

Theatre impresario Cameron Mackintosh, who knew Mr Tinker well, said last night: "He was probably one of my longest, closest friends in theatre. He was a friend, confidant and critic — a curious mix."

Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber said: "Jack was one of the few people who remained a true

friend whilst being a totally impartial critic. He passionately cared for the theatre."

Richard Eyre, director of the Royal National Theatre, who knew Mr Tinker for 25 years, also paid tribute. "He was perfectly cast. He really understood his audience and what he was writing about. He was an evangelist, a propagandist and an enthusiast but he wasn't a pushover. It would be quite unfair to characterise him as someone who was indiscriminately in love with the theatre."

Mr Eyre also expressed admiration for Mr Tinker's ability to dress appropriately for the theatre. "I loved the way

he dressed in the character of the show. He would dress up if it was a musical, and dress down if it was something gritty."

The Daily Mail's deputy managing editor, Garth Burden, said: "He was a wonderful journalist and will be sadly missed here. He was a very approachable person and did a wonderful job for the newspaper."

Mr Tinker had just returned from a trip to New York, from where he had filed a report on Broadway. On the return journey, he performed his one-man show, An Evening With Jack Tinker, on the Q&A.

Fellow critic Michael Coveney of the Observer said yesterday: "Critic dies, a nation mourns may sound funny, but Jack embodied some sort of spirit in the theatre. He was an hysterically funny man. He was always immaculately turned out. He used to be dressed by Mothercare and Miss Selfridge, and then one day he turned up in Jean-Paul Gaultier."

Mr Tinker, who wrote several books as well as his journalistic duties, is survived by two daughters and his former wife.

Obituary, page 10

Home town universities considered

James Melkie

THOUSANDS more students would start their university courses at local further education colleges under proposals being studied by a government-appointed inquiry into higher education.

They might spend up to two years on home town campuses, often reading for new "associate degrees", before completing their studies elsewhere or seeking work with job-oriented qualifications.

Ministers want to reverse the trend for degree-level courses becoming the norm in the higher education system, while Labour believes the ideas could mean renewed expansion without huge extra costs subsidising students living away from home.

A team working for the inquiry, headed by Sir Ron Dearing, the Government's education MP, is in the United States studying standards of its two-year associate degrees and four-year honours degrees, their value on the job market, and the transfer of students between different types of institution.

The number of students in higher education has doubled in Britain over the last 10 years to more than 1.6 million. Postgraduate student numbers have more than tripled to 350,000, and those on undergraduate degree courses have more than doubled to more than one million. However, those on sub-degree courses, 274,000, have hardly changed, accounting for only one in six students.

The Government has temporarily halted expansion, with about one in three 18 to 22-year-olds having some higher education. But it aims for 40 per cent participation rates,

with further growth in the number of mature students. Ministers, in their submission to the Dearing inquiry, called for a dramatic increase in sub-degree work.

The US has well-established links between two-year junior, community colleges and technical colleges, liberal arts colleges and universities offering four-year courses, and professional colleges and research and graduate schools.

Any attempt to borrow American methods of mass higher education would involve changing the status of further education colleges in Britain. Only 5 per cent of their students study for their higher level qualifications, few to degree level, and while some links are developing between the colleges and universities, they are nothing like as established.

Bryan Davies, the shadow spokesman for higher education, said: "Dearing would not be fulfilling its obligations if it were not casting its net widely for interesting developments and ideas for expanding education opportunity and making it, in certain areas, more cost-effective."

Labour has already suggested a year of study at a home university followed by completion of courses elsewhere could keep down costs and reduce pressure on university accommodation.

The Association of Colleges expressed its support for the Dearing study while David Melville, chief executive of the Further Education Funding Council for England, said the expansion into more advanced courses should build on the colleges' traditions of helping older, part-time, more job-oriented students.

Two-track minds, Q2 Education, page 11.

Willetts hearing to be televised

David Hencks Westminster Correspondent

THE Government agreed to go ahead with the televising of high-flying junior minister David Willetts in the cash for questions affair, despite protests from Tory MPs last night.

The Commons Standards and Privileges Committee decided to have a televised hearing on November 11 after asking the Government to hand over memoranda from the Whips Office next week.

Mr Willetts will face questions over a memo he wrote about trying to influence an investigation into whether Neil Hamilton, the disgraced former trade minister, had taken cash from Mohammed Al-Fayed, the owner of Harrods. Mr Willetts, then a junior whip, suggested the committee could use its Tory majority to smother the affair or stop the inquiry because of the then impending libel case against the Guardian.

The committee will today publish a report showing how it intends to handle the inquiry and what assistance Sir Gordon Downey, the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards, will receive to investigate the MPs involved.


Two MPs, Sir David Mitchell and Sir Archie Hamilton, had to leave the proceedings while MPs discussed their im-

partiality. Sir David is understood to have made it clear he had no brief for Neil Hamilton, his parliamentary private secretary.

Labour MP Dale Campbell Savours was asked to comment on claims he was pro Mr Al Fayed following a complaint to the Speaker yesterday by Tory MP David Shaw, whose Dover constituency association took £500 from lobbyists Ian Greer Associates.

Mr Shaw, a close friend of David Allen, the head of courier company DHL, which donated the cash to Ian Greer, raised questions about the tabling of 58 motions by Mr Campbell Savours which, he said, benefited the Harrods boss in his battle with Tiny Rowland. "I wonder if it would be of concern to you and your office if a member of the Standards and Privileges Committee had taken a very strong position in the battle between Tiny Rowland and Al Fayed and had put down 58 Early Day Motions on one side, Mr Al Fayed? In those circumstances, would it not be in the interests of the Commons if that member did stand down from the committee?"

Mr Campbell Savours said: "The complaint was a blatant attempt to nobble the jury, inspired by Ian Greer, to ensure an unfair hearing. [It] is preposterous given these motions were in public and I never met Mr Al Fayed."



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4 BRITAIN

News in brief

Raped girl seized in high street

A 15-YEAR-OLD girl was receiving counselling as police hunted three men who abducted her as she walked on a high street in the Kings Heath area of Birmingham and raped her repeatedly during a 12-hour ordeal. The girl, from West Heath, was approached by three males in their mid to late 20s who began making "derogatory remarks" before she was bundled screaming into a four-door car by the men who drove off from the busy shopping street. She was taken to an unknown building and raped by all three men before being thrown out of the vehicle in the Northfield area 12 hours later at 3.30am. A West Midlands Police spokesman described the incident as a "horrendous attack on a lone young girl in broad daylight".

£7,000 for neck pain

A WOMAN whose neck problem was aggravated by her work checking lingerie was yesterday awarded £7,000 High Court damages. Olive Jacobs, aged 56, of Eaton Socon, Cambridgeshire, had claimed that her job as a garment examiner for Cortaulds Textiles (Holdings) Ltd at their factory at St Neots, Cambridgeshire, led to persistent neck pain which forced her to give up work in January 1990. Mr Justice Roush said that her existing condition of cervical spondylosis was mainly to blame but her employers were at fault in not doing all they could to help when her neck problems became plain. The damages included £2,000 for pain and suffering with the balance made up of lost wages.

Mother and children die

POLICE are treating as suicide the death of 28-year-old Diane Larmour whose body was found with those of her son Matthew, five, and four-year-old daughter Rebecca in a car in a garage at a house in Borrowash, near Derby, yesterday. Detective Superintendent Phil Harding, of Derbyshire police, said: "At this stage there is nothing to suggest that anyone else was involved."

£12m cannabis capture

POLICE and customs officers say they have halted a £12 million operation to smuggle cannabis from North Africa after they boarded a 40ft British registered yacht Fata Morgana in treacherous conditions off the coast of Cornwall. Four men were arrested on the yacht and four waiting on the shore. There were further related arrests in Bristol, Cheltenham, Hull and London.

Car family saved

A QUALIFIED lifesaver Susan Walters, 35, helped keep a family afloat for 20 minutes after they escaped from their car which had plunged off a dock into 60 feet of water during a force six gale at Exmouth, Devon. The driver, a businessman Paul Nightgale, his wife Ann and their 11-year-old daughter, Ann, were treated in hospital for shock.

Circus's London drive

CIRQUE DU SOLEIL, a Canadian circus which uses no performing animals, is planning a recruitment drive in London for 125 people to perform in four different shows across three continents. The circus, combines athleticism with showmanship.

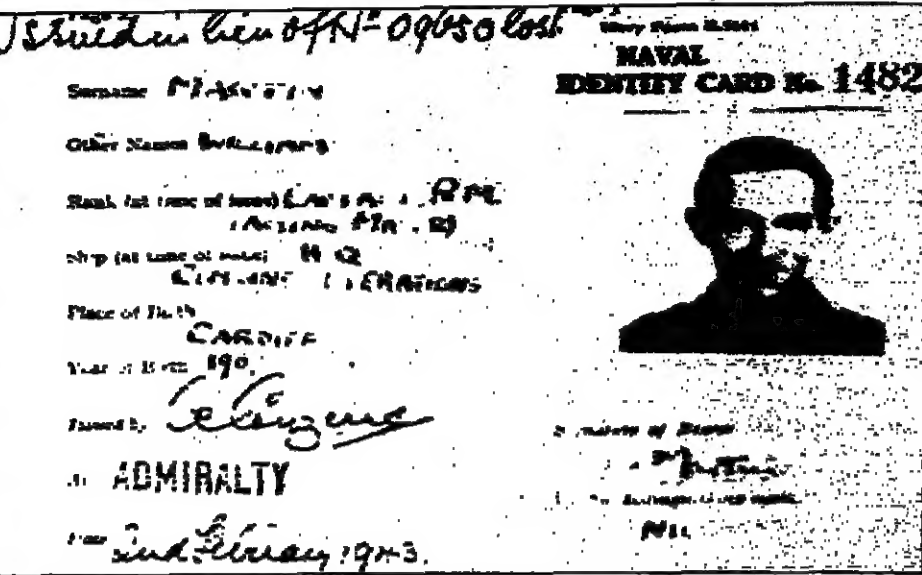
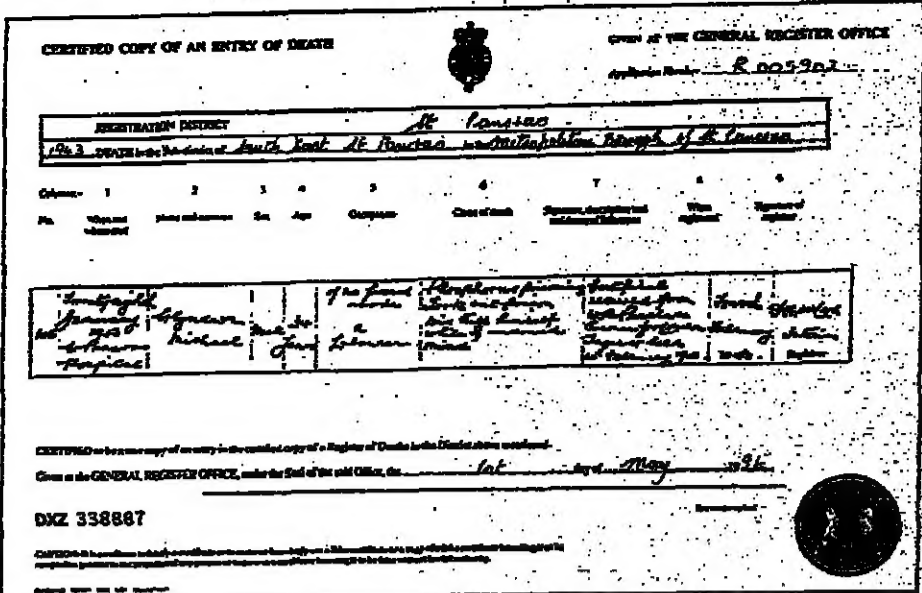
Boost for bitterns

THE European Commission is expected to inject more than £1 million into a project to secure the future of the bittern, one of Britain's rarest birds, by repairing and restoring marshland and reed beds in East Anglian areas like Minster, Suffolk, where the birds have their stronghold. The number of male bitterns is unknown, but at least 22 different males, who utter a characteristic booming sound, have been identified by computer print-outs of the pitch of the calls.

John Ezard on the Man Who Never Was



Michael's grave in Spain (left) and identity card (bottom right) carry the name Major William Martin. Now Michael's identity has been revealed and a death certificate (top right) issued.

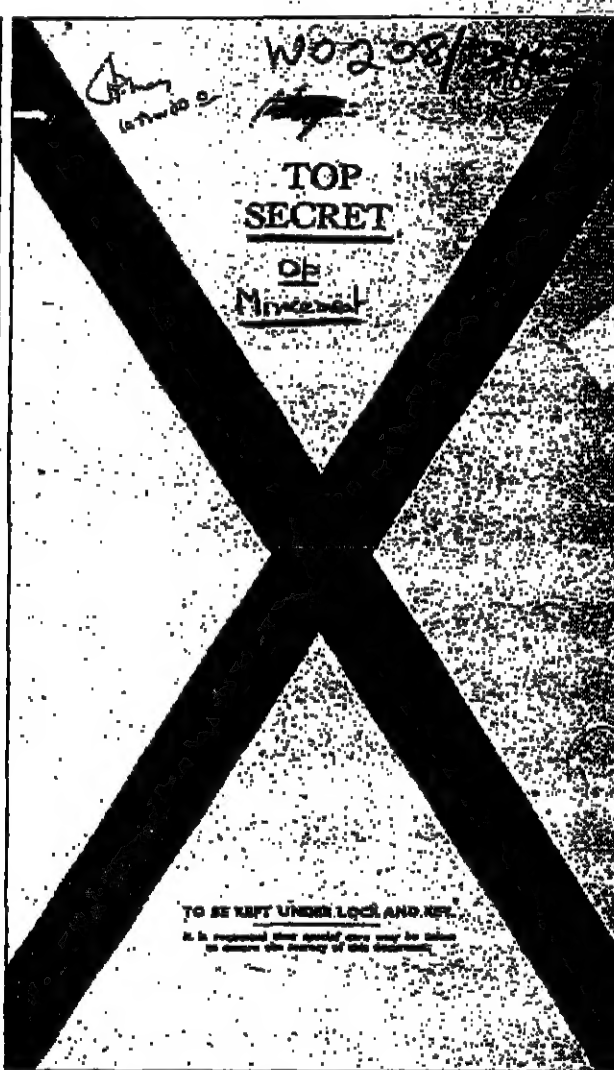


Mystery warrior identified

Last chapter is written in one of wartime's strangest deceptions

ONE of the lingering mysteries of the second world war — the identity of The Man Who Never Was — has been solved by the persistence of an amateur researcher. The man was Glyndwr Michael, aged 34, a homeless, mentally ill Welshman who killed himself with rat poison 53 years ago. His body was used in a British Intelligence operation which misled Nazi Germany and saved thousands of British lives in the allied conquest of Italy. Only three men — one of them Winston Churchill —

found the name in a government document on deception operations. "It was an incredible moment," he said. Glyndwr Michael was born illegitimate in Aberbeeg, Mid-Glamorgan. Unemployed, he moved to London and lived as a tramp. He was rejected for war service as mentally ill. On January 28 he ate phosphorous poison in a warehouse and died. The verdict was suicide. His body attracted attention because the coroner knew through a friend, the forensic pathologist Sir Bernard Spilbury, that naval intelligence was seeking a corpse. It had to be of a man in his mid-30s whose cause of death could be confused with drowning. Michael's remains became the centrepiece of Operation Mincemeat, a scheme to convince Germany that the allies would invade Nazi Europe through Greece or Sardinia rather than Sicily. Packed in dry ice, Michael was taken from Hackney mortuary, put aboard a submarine, then cast into the sea near Gibraltar. Chained to his wrist was a briefcase with forged official papers hinting at bogus landings. In his wallet were marks of a successful life he never had, including a snapshot of a fiancée in a swimsuit. These named him as Major William Martin. The body was found by a Spanish fisherman. The documents reached German authorities in Madrid. Within days Britain knew that the German high command thought the papers genuine. His civilian name is inscribed on his headstone. "Mincemeat swallowed rod-



The document which revealed the identity of Glyndwr Michael — man who never was. PHOTOGRAPH AFTER THE BATTLE

16 British airports 'have no hi-tech baggage security'

Richard Norton-Taylor
THE Department of Transport acknowledged yesterday that nearly half of Britain's airports lack up-to-date baggage screening equipment but said security procedures were well in advance of those in other countries, including the United States. A report by David Lord, the department's head of transport security and a former MI5 officer, has found that 16 of the country's 33 airports do not screen all hold baggage. The department says that for security reasons it will not name the airports which have yet to install adequate numbers of machines. These include the CTX 5000, costing about \$650,000, which X-rays luggage and can detect Semtex and RDX explosives. MI5 spokesman for the British Airports Authority said that all transfer baggage — the source of the bomb which blew up the PanAm jumbo over Lockerbie in 1988 — was screened at its seven airports. Hold baggage going to "high risk" destinations, mainly the Middle East, is screened, as is baggage destined for countries where security services advise are terrorist targets. The BAA runs Heathrow, Gatwick, Stansted, Southampton, Edinburgh, Glasgow and Aberdeen airports. A Department of Transport spokesman said it was up to individual airports to decide what screening equipment to buy. He said 17 airports had already installed equipment to screen all baggage. "British international airports have more baggage screening machines than the rest of the world put together," he said. In the US, only San Francisco and Atlanta airports operate modern baggage screening equipment. Airlines are responsible for screening hold baggage, while airports are responsible for screening passengers and cabin baggage.

Motorists go down memory lane as M25 celebrates 10 years

Keith Harper
Transport Editor
A MAN whose hobby is driving round the M25 will not be able to celebrate its 10th anniversary today, because he is selling his A registered Ford Fiesta for a newer, faster model. Mark Reed, a 21-year-old Safeway counter assistant from Weymouth, Dorset, cannot get enough of the motorway most drivers love to hate. Even the Government will today draw back from extolling the virtues of a 70-mile stretch of road which is responsible for half the country's motorway congestion. "It'll be business as usual. We really don't want to make a fuss," explained the Highways Agency. Mr Reed, who has already taken his mother on several 120-mile shopping expeditions round Britain's most heavily used motorway said: "There's no road quite like it. It's the ultimate driving experience. You have to keep your wits about you at all times." Another person prepared to glow about the M25 is Kevin Delaney, the RAC's traffic and road safety manager. "It is a national asset, moving huge volumes of traffic with a degree of efficiency that belies the under investment in carriageway improvements." Bizarre incidents have become everyday occurrences during its difficult decade: □ Grandfather William Allen, aged 84, spent two days circling it looking for his daughter's home. □ Retired dustman George Tilbury slept in hedges after becoming lost on his motorbike on a journey which should have taken 30 minutes. □ A police car rescued an elderly woman cycling the wrong way down the outside lane at Godstone, Surrey.

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If you talk to politicians, broadcasters, government departments and the regulatory bodies that are charged with overseeing the introduction of digital broadcasting in a little over a year's time, you find a mixture of trust, ignorance and defeatism that you know can only result in commercial triumph for Murdoch.

Henry Porter, G2 cover story

Man v 'expo'

Starting more sm...

Starting a business isn't just a case of... For things to... the support of... That's why... For the lost... first choice for... experience has...

West Bank war games belie peace talk

Israel's prime minister is being harried by his increasingly disenchanted and fractious supporters to renege on the Palestinian peace agreement signed by his predecessor Yitzhak Rabin, writes **Shyam Bhatia** in Jerusalem

MAJOR-GENERAL Uzi Dayan watched as Israeli troops participated in a mock battle last week to recapture the Palestinian city of Nablus. Gen Dayan, a nephew of Israel's war hero, the late Moshe Dayan, is military commander of the West Bank. Tanks and helicopters used live ammunition as paratroopers stormed a cardboard replica of the Nablus cashah and hung the Star of David from its ramparts. Israeli soldiers disguised as Palestinian policemen fought back unsuccessfully as the army, spearheaded by elite commando units, tightened its grip on the city. Gen Dayan, using the tactics deployed by his illustrious uncle in the 1967 Middle East war, needed only a few hours to complete a mission that took Moshe Dayan six days to accomplish. The war fever that grips Israel's military top brass today has a chilling similarity to the mood that prevailed on the outbreak of the 1967 hostilities. In private some army generals, including Gen Dayan, admit to a sense of personal humiliation following last month's bloody confrontations with the Palestinians. The Israelis lost 15 soldiers in

Negotiations stutter over withdrawal

Derek Brown in Jerusalem
THE Israel-PLO peace talks went into suspended animation yesterday, as the Palestinian president, Yasser Arafat, left for talks in Norway and Ireland, and the United States mediator Dennis Ross returned to Washington.

After more than three weeks of talks about the withdrawal of Israeli occupation forces from the West Bank city of Hebron, each side is still complaining about the other's tactics. Officials were meeting last night in an effort to break the impasse. Mr Ross said that the Palestinian leader's absence would hamper the process and Israeli officials blamed Mr Arafat for stalling the talks. But the PLO chief said in Oslo that he had come for "another push from outside" to help avoid a negotiating deadlock.

The European Union yesterday appointed a special envoy to the Middle East peace talks — despite Israeli opposition and strong misgivings in the United States. EU foreign ministers said in Luxembourg that the present Spanish ambassador to Israel, Miguel Angel Moratinos, would represent the European Union in the negotiations. Mr Moratinos has also been told to report to the EU — the largest source of international aid for the region — any breach of the

agreement covering the status of Jerusalem. There are ominous signals that extremists on both sides are preparing to sabotage the peace process, with reports in recent days that Palestinians and Jewish settlers in Hebron are stockpiling illegal weapons and outbreaks of violence between settlers and Arabs in the region.

To add to his problems, Mr Netanyahu has been told the army needs 3.5 billion shekels (£1.6 billion) because of an increased chance of war with Syria. Yesterday the defence minister, Yitzhak Mordechai, told a parliamentary committee the Israeli forces planned a big Syrian military exercise and were "taking the necessary steps for maximum alertness". At least three of Mr Netanyahu's cabinet colleagues have warned they will resign if he implements the Oslo agreement. They say the issue of Hebron is "only the first phase of a dangerous process. Other milestones — such as freeing Palestinian security prisoners and creating safe corridors between Gaza and the West Bank — are just as unacceptable."

"The right is very divided," said Elyakim Haetzni, a lawyer and West Bank settler. "If Netanyahu steps into Rabin's shoes, I am confident a new political party will be formed because Likud will no longer represent the right."

"Agreements with Arafat are written on sand. Therefore the only thing of value is that our army should be able to enter Hebron at any time and for any reason. If this is not to be, Hebron will be like Nablus, a second Sarajevo of the Middle East."

the clashes with Yasser Arafat's police force. Last week's secret military exercises to recapture Nablus and other Palestinian cities were authorised by the Israeli prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, who is under pressure from his rightwing supporters to teach the Palestinians a lesson by renege on the Oslo peace accords. It is an open secret that Mr Netanyahu shares his constituency's distaste for Oslo, which he believes will lead to the partition of the "land of Israel" and the creation of an independent Palestinian state. He sees himself as a prisoner of unacceptable agreements and understandings negotiated by his Labour

professor, Yitzhak Rabin. "It's not an easy situation," says a source in the prime minister's office. "Anything that's good for the Palestinians is bad for Israel and anything that's good for Israel is bad for the Palestinians. It's not clear to us how we can escape from this trap." Many of Mr Netanyahu's supporters say war is the only solution. Some pray that the Palestinians will initiate hostilities and provide the Israeli army with an excuse to retaliate and drive the final nail into the Oslo coffin. They are critical of the prime minister for not seizing the strategic opportunity that was presented to him during last month's mini-intifada.

"Netanyahu voters expected him to end or at least suspend the policy of pull-backs," said Yisrael Harel, one of the leaders of 150,000 Jewish settlers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. "But instead he rushed off to meet Arafat in Washington. There, nauseatingly, he grovelled and called Arafat his 'friend' and 'partner'." Disappointment with Mr Netanyahu is shared across the spectrum of Israel's right wing. Like Rabin, he is being branded a traitor for agreeing to give the Palestinians control over more parts of the West Bank. If and when Mr Netanyahu hands over the West Bank city of Hebron to Mr Arafat, he will reap the

whirlwind of the right's pent-up anger. The prime minister has already committed himself to the principle of Israel's military withdrawal from the city, where 400 Jewish ideologues live among more than 100,000 Arabs. As the countdown for the withdrawal gets under way, Israelis are once again talking about the "writing on the wall". Jewish fanatics have threatened violence to prevent Mr Arafat's "uninformed thugs" from entering the city. Today thousands of Netanyahu supporters will meet in central Jerusalem to hold a rally against his intention to compromise on Hebron. One organiser, Nadia Mattar, said:

"Hebron is a test. If they pull out, we will all protest and demonstrate. To say that we are very worried is a mild expression. We understand that what the government has already agreed is not very different from before."

Last weekend, Ms Mattar and her supporters published full-page advertisements in Israeli newspapers addressed to the prime minister. "Oslo gave guns to Arab police who used them to kill our soldiers. Their blood cries out not to repeat that grave error in Hebron. In September 1995 you said the Israeli army must retain sole responsibility for the security of Hebron; this authority cannot be divided or it will bring on disaster."



Rescue teams find survivors after collapse of Cairo flats

RESCUE workers looked for survivors yesterday in the rubble of a 12-storey block of flats that collapsed in Heliopolis, Cairo. Using cranes they rescued 15 people, but dozens of others were still believed

trapped inside. A total of 15 bodies have been removed and police say more than 60 people remain unaccounted for. Six survivors were rescued on Sunday. Police detained a building contractor and an engineering consultant for questioning, saying they may have been responsible for the building's structure by ordering the removal of walls during the renovation of a flat. The building's owner was also

arrested. Some residents of the 40 flats jumped from their balconies as the building crumbled, a neighbour, Ahmed Mohammed, said. All but the back side of the building fell, piling debris five storeys high.

As cranes moved enormous slabs of concrete yesterday, dogs prowled the ruins and listening devices were brought in to help trace calls or tapping for help. — AP.

PHOTOGRAPH: ENRICH MARTI

News in brief

Corsican separatist claims Paris talks

FRANCOIS Santoni, the head of the Corsican separatist Cuncolta Neuzionalista party, said yesterday that his group had held secret talks with members of the French government, including Maurice Gourdault-Montagne, a senior aide of the prime minister, Alain Juppé. But Mr Juppé's office dismissed the claims as "grotesque lies by a terrorist". Mr Santoni's party is the legal wing of the outlawed Corsican National Liberation Front (FLNC), the most hardline group on the island. He also alleged in an interview with the *Est-Republicain* newspaper that a rally in January of 600 heavily armed FLNC guerrillas was organised at the behest of the government, which wanted to show the French public that the group was popular in Corsica and should be negotiated with. Meanwhile, separatists continued a bombing campaign with an attack against the home of the mayor of the northern town of Bastia early yesterday. Emile Zaccarelli was out at the time and no one was hurt. — *Reuters, Paris.*

Rwanda denies helping rebels

The Rwandan president, Pasteur Bizimungu, yesterday denied that his country was providing military help to the Tutsi Banyamulenge rebels in eastern Zaire, a claim that Rwanda's Tutsi-dominated army had been involved in shelling refugee camps housing Rwandan Hutus in eastern Zaire. But he said he morally supported the Banyamulenge's struggle against "extermination" by Zairean authorities. Observers strongly suspect the Rwandan military of assisting the Zairean Tutsi militias. "We are not supporting the Banyamulenge military. We are not interested in the conquest of land, but people's rights must be respected. The Banyamulenge are entitled to live in Zaire," Mr Bizimungu said. "Morally I support their struggle between extermination and survival. I support their resistance against the Zairean authorities." Mr Bizimungu, a Hutu, accused Zaire of being the troublemaker in the Great Lakes region. "Zaire has allowed traffic of arms in the refugee camps. It has armed and trained the refugees," he said. — *Reuters, Kigali.*

Cult cover-up costs job

A SENIOR Tokyo police official was abruptly replaced yesterday because his department had concealed a confession by one of its own officers to the shooting of the chief of the national police agency last year. The Tokyo metropolitan police department first heard the confession of the 31-year-old officer in May but did not tell anyone outside the department until last week, local news accounts said. Takaji Kumimatsu was shot and seriously wounded on March 30 last year, 10 days after the nerve gas attack on Tokyo's subway by members of the Aum Shinrikyo religious cult. The officer who has confessed to the shooting was apparently a cult follower, and Japanese media reported that he told investigators he shot Mr Kumimatsu on orders from senior cult leaders. The Tokyo police department's chief of public security, Masaru Sakurai, was not fired outright but was given a replacement position. He had been in charge of the investigation into Mr Kumimatsu's shooting. — *AP, Tokyo.*

Colombo quiet on shootings

SRI LANKA'S foreign affairs ministry yesterday refused to comment on claims by the Tamil Tigers that Colombo was behind the killing of two of the group's officials in Paris on Saturday. A statement from the Tigers' international secretary in London condemned the killing of their treasurer, Kandiah Perinpanathan, and Kandiah Gajendran, editor of the Tamil weekly newspaper *Kela Muralu*. It said the killings were part of the Sri Lankan government's attempt to hit the rebels' finances, and appeared to blame Tamils co-operating with Colombo. — *Reuters, Colombo.*

Bill deliveries delight Danes

DANISH police said yesterday that they had identified a mysterious person who distributed around 75,000 kroner (€3,000) to strangers in the western town of Skanderborg. The person, who put a hand-written note in each envelope urging people to spend the enclosed money, has demanded anonymity, police said. They ruled out speculation that a religious group or a mentally unstable person was behind the gifts. Residents found the envelopes in their post on Saturday. Many at first thought they were the victims of a joke but later they called the police when they realised that others had also received a 100 kroner bill. — *AP, Copenhagen.*

Bad year for the rats

BEIJING, which launched a fly-swating drive in a failed bid to host the 2000 Olympics, has turned its wrath on rodents, declaring November 12 rat-killing day. Thousands of rodent warriors will fan out across the city, setting traps and laying poison. Warehouses, market places and construction sites will be the key targets. Earlier this year, residents of the north-eastern city of Shenyang eliminated 400,000 rats in a similar campaign. Under the Chinese lunar calendar, 1996 is the year of the rat. — *Reuters, Beijing.*

One-horse race to rule Hong Kong

Andrew Higgins in Hong Kong

THE selection of Hong Kong's first post-colonial governor — an exercise mocked by democrats as a charade choreographed by China — entered its final phase yesterday with more than 30 people declaring their ambition to replace Chris Patten next July. But, as applications closed, the appearance of an open contest masked the reality of what many believe to be a one-horse race by a Shanghai-

born shipping magnate, Tung Chee-hwa. A Beijing-appointed committee overseeing the process declined yesterday to name his rivals. The chief challenger seems to be Sir Ti-lung Yang, a fellow Shanghai who resigned last month as Hong Kong's chief justice. He won favour with China by supporting a plan to neuter the territory's bill of rights after 1997. Sir Ti-lung yesterday endorsed China's intention to dismantle an elected legislature and form an unelected "provisional" body, calling it "legal and necessary".

"You cannot expect the chief executive to be in a position to say no to Beijing. They would never select such a person," said Martin Lee, leader of the colony's most popular political group, the Democratic Party. "Whoever gets the job will be led by the nose like a horse." The winner will be announced in December by a 400-member selection committee, a body whose composition has yet to be announced. The Democratic Party is boycotting it. The razzmatazz and rhetoric of an open election, which has included press conferences by normally secretive tycoons and pledges by Mr Tung and other fabulously wealthy magnates to visit Hong Kong, seems a tightly-controlled decision-making process.

But the exercise has revealed bitter competition between rival Hong Kong business dynasties, which have benefited from ties to the British colonial administration and want to ensure they enjoy the favour of the post-1997 regime. The link between politics and business was made clear last week by Mr Tung who acknowledged that China had helped bail out his family's shipping empire in the 1980s. Other candidates are Peter Woo, a Shanghai-born millionaire and son-in-law of the late Sir Y.K. Fao, another shipping magnate and business rival of Mr Tung's family, and Simon Li, a former judge and member of another Hong Kong family dynasty. Seto Wah, branded a "subversive" by Beijing, has launched a mock campaign for the post of chief executive to publicise demands that Mr Patten's successor be elected by popular vote. The 28 British governors who have ruled Hong Kong since 1843 were chosen in London without democratic consultation. "Anyone who is not acceptable to Beijing does not have a chance of even becoming even a candidate," said Joseph Cheng, a political scientist at Hong Kong City University. "The crucial issue is not the choice of a chief executive but political developments in Beijing. What happens in Beijing is far more important than the identity of the chief executive."

Protests grow against Bhutto

Suzanne Goldenberg in Islamabad

THREE leaders of the religious opposition party Jamaat-i-Islami were picked up in a police sweep yesterday as the Pakistani authorities tried to stop protests against Benazir Bhutto's government. Nearly 4,000 followers of the Islamist party prayed in front of parliament in a dramatic show of power, and, for the second day running, riot police fought with them in the capital and the adjoining city of Rawalpindi. Their leader, Hussein Ahmed, was detained for several hours before being released. The extraordinary prayer meeting lasted about half an hour before police doused the protesters with hundreds of rounds of tear gas. Mass rallies are banned in Islamabad, and yesterday's events showed the ability of Jamaat, which has just three seats in parliament, to get its supporters, mainly students,

on to the streets. They also paralysed much of Islamabad as police chased demonstrators down city streets. The show of strength could also serve to mobilise the main opposition parties against Ms Bhutto, who is coming under increasingly fierce attack for alleged corruption and financial mismanagement. Hussein Ahmed is not alone in wanting her government out. In yesterday's police sweep, he and his deputy, Khurshid Ahmed, were picked up, along with the party's number three, Ghafoor Ahmed. All three have now been released. The government, meanwhile, announced that Ms Bhutto had given up the finance portfolio. Her privatisation minister, Syed Naveed Qamar, is to get the post. The International Monetary Fund is delaying disbursement of a \$400 million standby loan because of Pakistan's repeated failures to meet agreed targets.

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Malta deals blow to EU integration

John Hooper
Southern Europe
Correspondent

ALFRED SANT was sworn in yesterday as Malta's first Labour prime minister for nine years after an historic vote in which most electors opted to scrap their country's application for membership of the European Union.

The result was the latest in a string of recent setbacks to the cause of European integration. The last few weeks have seen protests in several member states against the sacrifices being demanded for economic and monetary union.

Malta's outgoing prime minister, Edward Fenech Adami, who submitted his country's application to join the EU six years ago, had expected to begin membership negotiations next year.

His opponent campaigned successfully on a pledge to abolish Value Added Tax and

renew and nursed annual economic growth to a rate of more than 6 per cent last year.

But his right-of-centre administration alienated many less prosperous islanders by imposing 15 per cent VAT in preparation for EU membership even before talks began.

The new distribution of seats in the island's 65-seat parliament was not immediately clear. But Labour was assured of a majority.

"We are for all of Malta, not just Labour," Mr Sant said from the balcony of the presidential palace where he was sworn in by the head of state, Ugo Mifsud Bonnici. But, in a move which will not endear him to the Roman Catholic Church, he broke with tradition by failing to kiss a cross to inaugurate his government.

Mr Sant is unlikely to sponsor a return to the aggressive anti-Westernism of his predecessor, Dom Mintoff. A distinctly Blairite, white-collar socialist, he has put Labour back in power partly by wooing middle-class voters. He insists he is as committed as Mr Fenech Adami to Malta's growing role as a financial services centre.

But there are bound to be misgivings in Washington and European capitals about his foreign policy. On the eve of polling, he said his first priority — even before scrapping VAT — would be to pull Malta out of the Nato-led Partnership for Peace.

Mr Sant said Malta would adhere to the UN sanctions imposed on Libya for the Lockerbie aircraft bombing, but made it clear he wanted improved relations with Colonel Gaddafi's regime. "We want a special relationship with Europe, but I argue that you start with your neighbours," he said.

Mr Sant, aged 48, has more than a touch of the Renaissance man about him. A physicist by training, he studied public administration in France before serving as a diplomat in Malta's mission to the European Communities from 1970 to 1975. He holds a doctorate from Harvard Business School, is fluent in English, French and Italian and is the author of novels, plays and stories in Maltese.

He has put Labour back in power by wooing the middle class

reinstated customs duties — a move that would be anathema to Brussels. Mr Sant argued that the island's rapidly expanding but fragile and specialised economy could not bear the strains of full membership.

Labour took 50.7 per cent of the poll in Saturday's election. Mr Fenech Adami's Nationalists 47.8 per cent. The Times of Malta called it "the biggest upset for a quarter of a century".

Labour supporters launched into street celebrations on Sunday that continued yesterday. Fireworks rattled windows in Valletta and roads were clogged with cars dragging pots, pans and strings of beer cans.

Confident of success, Mr Fenech Adami had called elections eight months before time. He had cut unemployment, boosted tourist revenue

Ministers limit visas and warn Burma of further sanctions

John Palmer
in Luxembourg

THE European Union is ready to consider full economic and trade sanctions against Burma if the military dictatorship steps up repression of the democratic opposition. This emerged after EU foreign ministers, meeting in Luxembourg yesterday, imposed limits on contacts with Burmese officials in response to Rangoon's continuing failure to respect human rights.

The action was presented as part of an escalating campaign of pressure. "There is a very serious situation in Burma with a lack of respect for human rights and democracy," the Irish president of

the EU council of foreign ministers, Dick Spring, said in Luxembourg. "Today's decision reflects our concern."

Last month he met the Burmese foreign minister, Ohn Gya, at the United Nations in New York. The EU saw no sign that the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLOC) was softening its stance against the National League for Democracy and its leader, Aung San Suu Kyi.

The Danish government had threatened last week to pull out of the joint approach because of fears that the regulations would infringe Danish constitutional sovereignty. The lawyers' footwork found a way round that through a sub-clause in an obscure European convention passed unanimously in 1968 which



Germany's Chancellor Kohl and Indonesia's President Suharto admire their catch during a fishing trip off the coast near Jakarta PHOTOGRAPH: A. TOHR

Kohl offer turned down

John Aglionby in Jakarta

THE 1996 Nobel peace laureate, the Roman Catholic bishop of East Timor, Carlos Belo, declined an invitation to a meeting yesterday with Chancellor Helmut Kohl of Germany.

Mr Kohl said during a two-day visit to Indonesia that Bishop Belo said he "had too busy an agenda in East Timor", although the invitation was issued some time ago. Mr Kohl, under pressure to raise human rights issues on the trip, said he had discussed East Timor "intensively" during talks with President Suharto yesterday. "In our opinion, it is very important that the issue of East Timor be settled together with the people of East Timor in a peaceful, just and acceptable manner," Mr Kohl said.

The European Union does not recognise Indonesian rule over East Timor. Jakarta invaded the former Portuguese colony in 1975 and annexed it the following year.

Bishop Belo shares the 1996 peace prize with the East Timorese independence leader José Ramos Horta, who said yesterday that he would donate his share of the £725,000 prize to establishing a Lisbon-based foundation to further the independence cause.

United Europe fights US curbs

Stephen Bates
and John Palmer
in Luxembourg

EUROPEAN UNION foreign ministers last night overcame Danish objections to reach agreement on a challenge to United States legislation which would penalise EU companies trading with Cuba, Libya or Iran.

Lawyers found a way to proceed with united legislation from all 15 member states, threatening retaliation if the US goes ahead with the sanctions in American courts under the Helms/Burton act.

Under the regulations, any European company will be instructed to ignore the Helms/Burton legislation if its interests are threatened and, if it is successfully sued in the American courts, will be entitled to claim any financial penalties back through a counter-claim in a European court.

The counter-sanctions were being described last night as intended to concentrate minds in the US government once the presidential election is over next week, and to head off the threat of court battles on both sides of the Atlantic.

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Venezuela halts inquiry into mass grave and leaves evidence to rot

The government is ducking allegations surrounding a mass grave, Jane Knight in Caracas reports

A FETID odour hangs in the air near five cement buildings. A heap of broken coffins balances precariously on a nearby hillside — a fitting backdrop for the buildings, which house dozens of unidentified corpses.

The bodies have been left to rot since they were sealed into individual chambers six years ago. Only scratch marks on the cement differentiate the contents.

The corpses, which were dug up from a mass grave on the edge of the main cemetery in the Venezuelan capital, Caracas, form part of a case before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.

Local human rights groups say the 68 bodies exhumed were dumped clandestinely to hide the extent of the carnage after security forces killed hundreds of people in bloody street riots that broke out on February 27, 1989, in response to petrol price rises.

"We have been waiting for seven years. The state's silence has been absolute answer," said Lilianna Ortega, executive director of

Cofavic, an organisation representing families of the riot victims which has taken the case to the Washington-based human rights body.

Cemetery workers are unwilling to comment on the possibility that police dump their victims in the consecrated ground. But they readily refer to the mass grave site by its morbid nickname — the Plague.

Rumours of the Plague were sparked off by reports of vans laden with bodies, and photographs showing a large hole being dug in the cemetery after the riots. Sniffer dogs working with scientists helped excavate the site a year-and-a-half later.

The bodies were heaped on top of each other. Judge Saúl Ron Brasci, who ordered the excavation, says many had "faces of pain" and bullet wounds.

Most did not have the morgue's identification bracelets and were not registered in the cemetery's records.

After three corpses were identified as riot victims, the investigation was mysteriously stalled early in 1991. The rest were sealed off and left to deteriorate, along with the evidence.

Judge Brasci was moved to a new position outside Caracas in April 1991. "The whole process has been stopped," he said. "There seems to be some resistance to continuing the investigation."

Aura Liscano, aged 33, still scans the faces of pas-



ers-by for her brother, unsure if he is dead or alive. José Miguel Liscano, aged 21, has not been seen since he left his shantytown home in south-west Caracas the day after the riots.

"I think my brother is probably dead and in the Plague," Aura said. "But there's still a doubt."

No security agent has been convicted of any action during or after the riots.

According to the United States state department's annual human rights report, Venezuela's security forces carried out 126 illegal executions in the 12 months to September 1995.

Last week Venezuela's government agreed to pay compensation to the family of Eleazar Mavares, aged 18, in a separate case brought before the Inter-American Human Rights Commission.

On this year's anniversary of the riots, the then defence minister, Italo del Valle Aliegre, told journalists that reports that the grave contained riot victims were a "huge lie". He suggested the bodies were earthquake victims.

In March, the mayor of Caracas, Antonio Ledezma, led officials to a site near the Plague, where bodies, hospital gowns and empty firearm shells were scattered among bushes.

Some had died only months before, according to cemetery officials. None was registered, pointing to the possibility of further illegal killings. "Now a new plague has emerged," Mr Ledezma said.

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News in brief

Burundi army admits killings
Burundi's Tutsi-dominated army yesterday admitted killing some 50 ethnic Hutu civilians in the southern province of Bururi and said the soldiers responsible would be punished.

"On October 13 some undisciplined military killed civilians whom they accused of feeding the assassins [rebels] but there was no proof they were feeding the rebels," an army spokesman, Lieutenant-Colonel Isale Nibizi said. — Reuters.

Anthrax victims
At least nine people were infected with anthrax after eating contaminated beef in Troitskoye, Lipetsk, central Russia, and one of them died, Russian health officials said yesterday. — AP.

Reactor to close
Ukraine said yesterday that it would shut down one of two reactors still operating at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant on November 30, taking a big step towards full closure in line with promises to the West. — Reuters.

Ebola death toll
Three more people have died of the Ebola virus in Gabon, raising the death toll to 14, health officials said yesterday. — AP.

Carlos complains
The jailed guerrilla "Carlos the Jackal" has demanded that Carlos, The Secret Networks of International Terrorism, a book about him published this week, be banned on the grounds that it violates his right to be presumed innocent, justice sources said in Paris yesterday. — Reuters.

Aids drug trial
Up to 2,000 Romanian children suffering from Aids are to undergo a three-year clinical drug trial, following an agreement signed yesterday by Romania and a Texas hospital. — AP.

Border accord
Saudi Arabia and Qatar have signed a contract with a French company to demarcate their disputed border, signalling a move to end nearly four years of strained relations. — AP.

Journalists' strike
French journalists' unions have called a strike for November 14 over government plans to scrap a 30 per cent income tax reduction that has been compensation for professional expenses. — Reuters.

Marcos gems sale
A Philippines court yesterday authorised the auction of the bulk of a \$7.7 million jewellery collection of the former first lady Imelda Marcos, after rejecting a request by the Marcos family to stop the sale. — Reuters.

Foes reburied
The remains of about 100 soldiers from Croatia's second world war fascist army were reburied in a low-key ceremony near Amis on the Adriatic coast alongside anti-Nazi fighters, despite Jewish outrage. — Reuters.

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America and the world
An election non-issue which won't go away

FOREIGN AFFAIRS — to no one's surprise — are only peripheral to the US presidential contest as it gears up for the final week. No one is promising, or demanding, speedy action on Zaire or Afghanistan. Bill Clinton can proclaim without challenge his grand vision of the US building a bridge to the 21st century and the rest of the world. He has the advantage of incumbency, congratulating himself on carrying American values around the globe. With the collapse of communism, Bob Dole has lost a familiar target. If the president is "soft on China", then that suits Republican business too. Mr Dole is also constrained by the tradition of bipartisanship. He found no easy opening in Mr Clinton's Detroit speech on the expansion of the Atlantic Alliance: only this summer the Republican-controlled houses of congress passed by huge majorities the Nato enlargement act. When Mr Dole has accused Mr Clinton of weakness on specific issues — as in the case of Kurdistan — he risks ending up by having to endorse, grudgingly, presidential action. It does not really help Mr Dole that a number of foreign policy timebombs are ticking away — as in Bosnia, the Middle East or Russia. They have to blow up today, or within the next week: November 6 will be too late. The US public is not, contrary to the usual myth, isolationist, but neither is it passionately concerned with world affairs. Though social and economic issues rank ahead of foreign issues on the agenda, most Americans generally continue to favour US involvement abroad. This is viewed as important in terms of American interests rather than in the interests of the world (though most Americans would claim that the two coincide). The polls show that measures defined under the heading of "global altruism" — promoting human rights abroad, aiding developing nations etc — are only rated as very

important by about 30 per cent of the public. Twice as many place a high value on the maintenance of US "global interests" such as countering terrorism, and even more in the case of domestic issues linked to foreign policy (eg combating drugs and reducing immigration). One of the reasons why Bosnia has produced such an equivocal response from US public opinion is that it cannot decide whether US intervention is helping others, or itself, or both. Similarly, the view often expressed outside the US that American interest and influence is waning, for better or for worse, is wide of the mark. Like the cock-up theory of history, the thesis of diminishing US involvement can become an excuse for lack of serious analysis. Mr Clinton in his Nato speech described the US as "the indispensable nation" — a phrase he now uses frequently. It is true that he also subscribes to the view that new technologies will break down "the blocs and barriers that defined the world for previous generations." Yet this is not so different from the century-old US quest for an Open Door world — open particularly to US trade and influence. Critics of US intervention abroad often talk as if it can simply fade away, while those in favour fear that it will. That is not going to happen: the world's one surviving superpower is not about to efface itself. It retains a preponderant influence in those same "global" institutions which are supposed to supplant it, such as the IMF and the World Trade Organisation. When it decides to let the real global body which it should be supporting most vigorously — the United Nations — wither on the vine, it is hardly challenged. Mr Clinton in Detroit assigned all credit for peace in Bosnia to the US-led NATO, and did not even mention the UN. The question is not whether the US has an international role: it is what sort of role.

Murdoch: the digital dictator

Politicians have refused to curb him. Now it is almost too late

WHEN will the Conservatives or the Labour party be able to beg or borrow the guts to stand up to Rupert Murdoch? The great promise of the digital revolution — as set out by Al Gore, deputy President of the US — was that its products should be universally available and affordable. Yet by astutely buying up the main world sporting events and films Mr Murdoch is ensuring that key national events — often in stadiums funded by public money — are seen by fewer people (until, as he hopes, everyone is forced to take out a BSkyB subscription to see anything worthwhile at all). Now — as Henry Porter explains in G2 today — he is poised not just to own the sporting rights themselves but the electronic turnstiles through which we must all pass if we want to participate in the new revolution of digital television. He is about to place contracts for the first of what is likely to become millions of set-top boxes to decode the 18 and 65 of digital signals into high quality versatile pictures on our screens. In theory the BBC and ITV could push ahead and manufacture their own rival box. But they are so expensive (£200 to £400 depending how much Mr Murdoch decides to subsidise them) that few people will want to buy two boxes and by the time the others have got their act together the Rupert-box will already have established itself as the standard. Mr Murdoch could argue that he has had the foresight and the courage to spend large sums of money while the

others have been pusillanimous. That's true but not the point. Quite apart from the fact that it isn't a level playing field (Mr Murdoch's companies pay virtually no tax and have escaped the programming costs that ITV companies have to bear), the key to digital television's hundreds, maybe thousands of new channels is too important to be left in one pocket. Especially if it is the pocket of Mr Murdoch, whose overwhelming loyalty is to the profitability of his own company even if that means — outrageously — kicking the BBC off his Star satellite in the Far East to appease China, or booting out an editor (Andrew Neil) because he jeopardised his Malaysian ambitions or raising his charges hugely to cable companies in order, presumably, to squeeze them out of competitive existence. The gateway to digital television is so crucial it should be enshrined in law as a common carrier owned and operated by users without prejudice. In theory there are already restrictions on Mr Murdoch's potential to exploit his monopoly but everyone knows that in practice he will run rings round the regulators and will use the awesome power of his newspapers and media interests around the world to undermine any political party that dares to challenge his divine right to become the digital dictator of the information age. Labour will rue the day it gives way to him for short-term political advantage. Have no doubt, Citizen Murdoch will call in any favours.

The secret that always is

Britain's hidden strength may be brains not brawn

A MINOR mystery of the second world war has been solved: the identity of the so-called "man who never was". Now we know that it was the body of a depressive suicidal tramp called Glyndwr Michael that was deliberately washed ashore in Spain in 1943, carrying the forged papers which successfully hoaxed the Germans into believing that the allied invasion of southern Europe would start in Sardinia rather than Sicily. It has taken Roger Morgan more than thirty years of research to come up with Mr Michael's heroic but long forgotten name. To some, such an obsessive quest will seem almost absurd, or as another example of our inability to put the second world war behind us. Yet he has actually done us all a favour. The British obsession with the war provides us with a national myth of bravery which sustains our football hooligans and our armed forces alike.

But the conclusion to which the brilliant 1943 hoax points is rather different. Like the 1980s revelations about the Enigma code-breaking operations at Bletchley Park, it suggests that we have misled ourselves about the nature of the national genius. For it looks as though we owed victory in our Finest Hour less to bravery than to brains. If that is true, then there is a lesson for our times. The battle of Waterloo may or may not have been won on the playing-fields of Eton but the defeat of Hitler seems increasingly to have been won in the maths and science faculties of our universities. Without wishing to substitute one national stereotype for another, the inference is that victory goes not to the strongest but to the brightest. If the investment in British brains could defeat fascism then, who knows what else a fresh investment in the national grey cells might achieve now?



Letters to the Editor

Tory morals fail the school test

LET me reveal my state of damnation at once: I am not married (better red than wed, October 26). I have two happy, academically and socially successful daughters; a partner of 21 years' standing who is employed in a responsible position with a multinational company, a first-class degree in philosophy and classical studies, a cat, a house and a mortgage. Yet for the lack of a piece of legally worded paper, I am to be denounced as morally unsound. We took the long route to get where we are. My partner and I were both academic failures at school, largely because we were both so alienated from the rest of the "normal" children. My parents were separated and my father is black; my partner's parents were divorced. We both suffered from the cruelty inflicted by uncomprehending children who had been taught that one way of living was "right". My partner gained his extensive professional qualifications through years of day release. I gained mine as a mature student.

But my daughters have been more fortunate. Their peers, steeped in familial diversity, have not found cause to taunt them. I can hardly believe that responsible, worldly adults might be in all seriousness proposing to return to a situation where a child is denigrated and alienated from her contemporaries because her familial situation differs from the state-prescribed norm. Kim Shahabuddin, Norcot Road, Tilehurst, Reading RG30.

Working in the Middle and Far East, where parents and wider society take much of the responsibility for encouraging a culture of good behaviour, has given many Brits as to why standards in British society are in decline. Rob Freeth, Headteacher, Doha English-Speaking School, P O Box 7860, Doha, Qatar.

CHILDREN learn moral values in their homes, from school and by osmosis from those prevalent in society and implicit in the behaviour of the leaders of the country. What moral rectitude will children learn from the Government's appointment of Sir Archibald Hamilton as a judge of Neil Hamilton's conduct? As the Guardian reveals (Sir Archie's question of judgment, October 26), his financial transactions are not illegal, but ethically highly dubious, depending on how you view his practice of using his parliamentary privileges to secure large consultancy fees.

FOUR years ago I left my post as headteacher of one of the primary schools which sends most of its pupils to the Ridings School in Halifax. I did so largely because I had come to the conclusion that society uses teachers as scapegoats. Teachers who work in areas like the Ovenden estate have to deal with pupils who are not only disruptive and violent but whose bad behaviour is often encouraged by their parents. When the school takes the only meaningful action available to it and suspends one of these pupils, it frequently finds itself in conflict with not only the parents but politicians and authorities who prefer to blame teacher than address their own responsibilities.

IT WAS profoundly moving to hear Gillian Shephard call for a greater emphasis on the value of the family (Marriage key to Tory morals, October 26). Undoubtedly what she has in mind is asking one of her backbench colleagues in the Tory Party to assist us weaker brethren in seeing the importance of moral living. She is not short of choice: Tim Yeo will do as he knows only too well the benefits of multiple family life, or perhaps David Mellor (if she can afford his fees), and Stephen Norris could take time out from his range of mistresses. For a more patriotic view there is always Alan Clark, or indeed Lord Parkinson. Hypocrisy? Just a touch. Lawrence Waterman, Park Road, London W4.

CHILDREN learn moral values in their homes, from school and by osmosis from those prevalent in society and implicit in the behaviour of the leaders of the country. What moral rectitude will children learn from the Government's appointment of Sir Archibald Hamilton as a judge of Neil Hamilton's conduct? As the Guardian reveals (Sir Archie's question of judgment, October 26), his financial transactions are not illegal, but ethically highly dubious, depending on how you view his practice of using his parliamentary privileges to secure large consultancy fees. That Mrs Shephard should consider that she, as a member of this disreputable Government is equipped to dictate to the Schools Curriculum Authority on moral teaching in schools, defies belief. She's either wildly out of touch with public opinion and unbelievably arrogant, or else she's pulling our legs. Eileen Noakes, Ridgeway, 2 Lower Warren Road, Kingsbridge, Devon TQ7 1LF.

Howard's hard cell spurred

DURING the six months I spent in prison earlier this year, I met very few of the "dangerous and violent" offenders whom Michael Howard would have us believe are pecking the jails (Jailhouse Britain, October 26). Instead I met many under-educated women, most with young children, who were in jail for petty crimes, probation violations and non-payment of fines. For much of the time I spent in prison, staff shortages meant that education, association and even exercise — a statutory right — were cancelled on a daily basis. We were not infrequently locked up in our single cells for up to 24 hours a day. Why does Michael Howard think that treating people like animals, and locking them up for ever-longer periods, will reduce the propensity to reoffend? Andrea Needham, Oak Towers, Roughwood Drive, Kirby, Merseyside L35.

Glass houses

SO A public consultation exercise is planned for the Millennium Exhibition at Greenwich (Millennium plans enter crucial stage, October 26)? I hope this exercise will be more meaningful than here in Edinburgh, where the Council has agreed to ignore the Commission in steam-rollering opposition. Edinburgh City Council wants Millennium money for a £20million project to turn the historic and unspoiled city centre, Calton Hill, into a commercial theme park, mirroring Greenwich's time motif, and including the world's largest all-glass building. Residents and tourists alike overwhelmingly opposed the proposal. A poll conducted by the local paper at the Council's request showed 82 per cent against. Yet the councillors behind this intend to

claim support from their own "consultation exercise" — a case-study in low-information and high-marketing speak held in an obscure location at an exhibition of innovative architecture. Heavily loaded questionnaires there will provide the material to claim "public consent". Repeated pleas for open public meetings and impartial opinion polling are refused. The Millennium Commission, however, is the shadowy presence. It is unaccountable, but has an obvious interest in high-profile schemes going through. It is meant to take no part in developing plans. She is not short of choice: Tim Yeo will do as he knows only too well the benefits of multiple family life, or perhaps David Mellor (if she can afford his fees), and Stephen Norris could take time out from his range of mistresses. For a more patriotic view there is always Alan Clark, or indeed Lord Parkinson. Hypocrisy? Just a touch. Lawrence Waterman, Park Road, London W4.

On sponsors

ADAM Sweeting's perfectly fair review of The South Bank Show's The Making of Michael Collins (Double entry terrorism, October 26) rather obliquely but clearly raises the problem of our relationship with our new sponsors. The Sunday Telegraph, "So you had to wonder how the South Bank film fitted between the tectonic plates of corporate media interests, their political allegiances and circulation wars." Sponsorship is widespread and necessary in the arts today. The Sunday Telegraph has absolutely no editorial input into the South Bank Show. We have also made a policy of ensuring our editorial independence from the subjects we take on and the questions asked, of Neil Jordan or anyone else. Together with the rest of our documentaries, the film on Collins was a result of what we as a team wanted to say. Melvyn Bragg, Controller of Arts, LWT, London Television Centre, London SE1 9LT. We may edit letters: shorter ones are more likely to appear. We regret we cannot acknowledge those not used.

Post-mortem

FOLLOWING the outcry over my theory on the causes of the Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (Doctor's cot death line dismissed, October 26) I would be grateful for a chance to defend myself. The research was conducted over four years and culminated in a work of 15,000 words and some 350 references based mainly on studies for the USA, Australia and New Zealand. The paper I selected to quote which states that "risk has been found not to be elevated when the father smokes but not the mother" is well researched and has not been refuted. My work does not state that all cot deaths are due to poor parental care — to have quoted me otherwise is both dangerous and inflammatory. I have, however, explained not only the age incidence, but also how aetiology is related to each of the 11 risk factors. All of these cause sleep deprivation, except the prone sleeping position, with resultant intense (not "deep") and thus toneless sleep. Only a modest percentage of risk factors are associated with lapses in good care, and the latter are linked with a disrupting environment which prevents a mother from being preoccupied for that short vital time with her baby. (Dr) J Michael Simpson, Apt 128 Codex, 8400 Lagoa, Algarve, Portugal.

Harding, the soft touch

WONDER if I might add a short reminiscence of Matthew Harding (Letters, October 26), whose prompt reaction to a call for help from a female he didn't know and never met saved her from being thrown out on the street? As a sitting tenant of a property belonging to a company which was part of the Chelsea Football Club, I had asked to be allowed to stay on in one of their empty flats for a maximum two-month period after the agreed termination of my tenancy, until I could move into alternative accommodation. A request to the company had been met with instant rejection, and in desperation remembering an article about Matthew Harding in the Guardian over a year earlier which described him as affable and a socialist, I left a letter at his City office at 9.30am on June 24 this year, asking for his help. Literally 24 hours later, I was informed I could stay on, after what I later heard was a rather stormy board meeting the previous morning. Harding must have virtually followed me back from the City to Stamford Bridge to attend it. Susan Haskins, 12B Wilmington Square, London WC1X 0BS. AT A time when self-seeking politicians are jumping on the "morality" bandwagon, Matthew Harding's

A Country Diary

CHESHIRE: Wild flowers were becoming hard to find by the last week in October but I reached the grand total of 24 during a long walk through the valley on a warm and sunny autumn day. The Himalayan balsam on the river bank looked very bedraggled after the recent rains. However, there were still plenty of bright pink and white flowers in evidence and these, together with several patches of red campion and a few tall plants of hogweed, were the most obvious amongst those on the list. Less conspicuous was the herb Robert hidden away in a sheltered spot beneath a Hawthorn hedge and the tiny, white, star-shaped flowers of stems scrambling through the tall damp grass in a marshy depression close to the river. On a small grass embankment by the road that crosses the southern edge of the valley some black knapweed, devil-bit scabious and self-heal were still in flower and

Cheap shot

THE call by Dr Oscar Arias to control arms exports to the developing world is well justified (A plague of arms, October 21). However, earlier this year, Israel pulled off a rather deal with Costa Rica, in which his country paid more than \$3,000,000 for a consignment of second-hand Israeli weapons (famously, Costa Rica is said to be for improving the infrastructure, not for buying guns). (Dr) T J Gray, 6 Marten Road, Folkestone, Kent CT20 2RJ.

Advertisement for 'The Guardian' newspaper, including a 'Country Diary' section and other promotional text.

Diary

Matthew Norman

UNIQUELY touching documents have come into the Diary's possession. It is a British Airways competition form, filled out neatly in black ink...

GMTV: an apology. On Friday, it was erroneously stated that the breakfast station GMTV pulled out of an interview with John Major in favour of one with singing duo Robson and Jerome...

Sensational news from Oxfordshire, Banbury Conservative Club is contemplating changing its name after 102 years. The Banbury bit is fine. It's the rest they're not sure about.

STEPHEN Neville writes from Warley in the west Midlands to report receiving a free gift from a computer magazine. It is a CD-Rom of everything published in the Sunday Times last year...

ON the machine is a message from Uri Geller. "If you don't call me back," it says, "I will bend your phone." Uri, it transpires, wants to confirm Friday's item about the teddy bear...

ONE of those annual lists of Hollywood's 100 most powerful people has just been published. Now magazine reports a guess who makes a new entry at number 100? Yes, it's Lourdes Ciccone...



This is a trick for cutting holes in the law.

Howard, the Home Alone Secretary

Commentary Hugo Young

THE final session of this Parliament belongs to Michael Howard. There could be no more fitting garb on its tombstone...

Uniquely among ministers, the Home Secretary is lord of his terrain. He has political licence no other minister can match...

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agreement is indispensable. Any policy with international aspects brings in the Foreign Office. The need for cross-departmental consensus restrains even the most assertive Defence Secretary...

The Home Office lives in a different world. Crime is international, and Europe is ever-present, so the FCO has something to say. But "policy" often costs nothing up front...

His bills are the last attempt to clean up what has gone wrong, the detritus of 17 years. Paedophiles, stalkers, a plethora of guns and knives, above all the onward march of crime...

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ened, have left matters of crime and liberty to Mr Howard. Even the serious budgetary consequences of a policy that will involve building 20 more prisons has not excited their concern...

Next come the officials who, unlike ministers, actually want to be of service to the great man. Expertise and experience is what they are paid to deliver...

Disregard for their adherence to objectivity continues rampant. Take mandatory sentencing, the cornerstone of Mr Howard's valedictory bill...

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the crudity of a political instruction for the case-by-case justice judges presently administer, in new fields from burglary to rape...

So we know who he does not listen to. He ignores his colleagues. He ignores his officials, teaches a civics lesson to the judges...

He ignores colleagues, despises officials, teaches a civics lesson to judges

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Books beyond the Booker's city limits



D J Taylor

LAST month, the Cumbrian writer John Murray published his fourth novel, Reiver Blues: A Border Apocalypse (Flammarion, £8.99)...

However, I can guarantee that not one in 20 of the readers of this article, or the punters bidden to attend the Booker Prize dinner at the Guildhall, will even have heard of book or author.

Critics often complain about the cliquishness and back-scratching of the average books pages. Rarely, though, does anyone draw attention to their incoherent metropolitan bias...

Some, like Panurge Publishing in Cumbria or Sunk Island in Lincolnshire, have grown out of successful literary magazines. Others, like Flammarion, based in Newcastle...

writers one had actually heard of (Susan Curran and Jeremy Leland, for instance) Rampant Horse soon ran up against single, immovable obstacles: no one would review their books...

But the Rampant Horse experience is pervasive. Among half-a-dozen unjustly neglected regional writers, one might single out Julia Darling, whose short story collection, Bloodlines, again published by an obscure firm in the north-west...

A little research in the newspaper libraries confirms this bias. I selected two Sunday newspapers, the Times and Telegraph, and two dailies, the Guardian and Independent, with a reputation for good books coverage...

TAKE with this falling, the average literary editor tor tends to look glum and murrin about lack of space and literary titles. Many editors - the Sunday Times is a prime culprit - are forever nagging their staff to review books by well-known people...

To return to John Murray, I think that Reiver Blues is twice as good a book as - say - the new Margaret Drabble, currently clogging up space on every books page...

When knives are out

More murderers use what statistics call 'sharpened instruments' than they do handguns or shotguns. Duncan Campbell believes we must ban combat knives

THE simplest route from the Guardian offices to the Old Bailey is through Smithfield meat market. It seems somehow appropriate to have to step over pools of blood on the way to court...

Just south of the building, where Leacro Chindamo was jailed for life for stabbing head teacher Philip Lawrence to death last week...

THE earliest gun clubs in this country were set up after the Boer war, when it was realised by the government that the average English working-class man had no idea how to load, aim or clean a gun...

are looking for a weapon to inflict lethal damage you can find one in any butcher's equipment store, chemist's shop or ironmonger. Razors are viewed nostalgically in some quarters as liberal weapons because the wounds they inflicted were more damaging to a man's vanity than his life...

So after the - partially - successful crusade against handguns comes another against combat knives. There are a number of key differences in the debates. For a start, there is no significant

knife lobby. Nobody threw knives for Great Britain at Atlanta or, if they did, they didn't do it in any competitive arena. There are no knife clubs, no ranges where you can go and disembowel clay deer...

run? All the three police staff associations are in talks to see whether there is a definition of a combat knife that would differentiate it from a carver or a Boy Scout's knife. The Police Superintendents' Association has been most vocal on the subject...

There was no lasting campaign to ban combat knives. It was tacitly accepted that, since you could buy a lethal knife in any supermarket, there was little point in trying to prescribe other knives just because they looked ferocious...

So why are we having a re-

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So why are we having a re-

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Vice-Admiral Sir Hugh Mackenzie

Architect of Polaris

AS THIS administrative architect of the recently-disbanded Polaris ballistic missile submarine force, Vice-Admiral Sir Hugh Mackenzie, who has died aged 83, has a strong claim to the title of the most important submariner in British history.

After outstanding wartime service, Mackenzie rose to rear-admiral and became flag officer, submarines, at the turn of 1961. It was a testing time for submariners as they prepared to deploy HMS Dreadnought, Britain's first nuclear hunter-killer boat.

Technical backwardness and/or lack of funds obliged the Royal Navy to depend on American nuclear know-how. This reliance broadened enormously after Prime Minister Macmillan persuaded President Kennedy at the end of 1962 to let Britain buy Polaris strategic nuclear missiles, complete with the related submarine and electronic technologies. It seemed only natural to appoint Mackenzie chief Polaris executive on Boxing Day that year.

The task was a uniquely complex one for the Royal Navy. The A3 version of Polaris had to be fitted with a British warhead and deployed in British-built nuclear submarines with an American-designed midships section to hold the missiles. Under Mackenzie's tutelage, the first Polaris boat - HMS Resolution - was launched in 1966 and set off on her first armed patrol in June 1968.

The Royal Navy thus took over the British "independent" deterrent from the Royal Air Force's V-bomber force, courtesy of the White House.



Complex manoeuvre... Sir Hugh plans the introduction of Polaris to the navy. Alongside him is a model of a missile

Mackenzie then retired as a vice-admiral with his knight-hood (KCB). He had seen the project through from conception to realisation remarkably quickly and within budget. He also saw the end of the story, unveiling a plaque at Faslane in August this year to mark the end of the Polaris force after 28 years.

Mackenzie was born in In-

verness, one of four children of a Highland doctor. He was only 13 when he won a prized place at Dartmouth Naval College as a cadet. Although he loved the navy, Mackenzie was less keen on life aboard battleships and volunteered for the submarine service. This was risky because the Admiralty was once again discounting submarines, de-

spite the near-victory of the German U-boats in 1917. But the diminutive Mackenzie, nicknamed Rufus for his red hair, qualified in 1935 and got his first command, the submarine Thrasher, in the Mediterranean in 1941. The U-class boats were in the thick of the ferocious submarine campaigns in the Mediterranean; 13 were sunk,

nearly half the total deployed. Thrasher almost joined them when two unexploded bombs lodged inside her outer hull after an air-attack provoked by her sinking a freighter on the Axis supply-line. His first lieutenant and a petty officer each won the Victoria Cross for dislodging them. Five months later, Thrasher was almost sunk by

bombardment from a British naval aircraft. Mackenzie managed to bring her into Port Said in a sinking condition. For his part in sinking 11 enemy vessels, including vital tankers and Mussolini's heavily-armed "yacht", laden with petrol meant for Rommel's tanks, Mackenzie was awarded a DSO in 1942 and a second in 1943.

He then transferred to a new submarine, the Tantalus, and a new theatre of combat, the Pacific. There he made the two longest patrols of the war by a British submarine. Based at Fremantle, Australia, he took his new boat into the narrow waters of the Java and South China seas, evading Japanese patrols, U-boats and mines. For his exploits in the Far East, he was awarded the DSC in 1945.

After the war, Mackenzie took charge of the notorious "perisher" course for would-be submarine skippers from 1946-48. As a captain, he commanded a flotilla of destroyers and two shore establishments before returning to his beloved submarines as chief staff officer to his flag officer, whose post he inherited in summer 1961.

In retirement, he chaired the Navy League for six years until 1974. A keen fisherman, he also sat on the board of the Atlantic Salmon Trust, which he left as chairman in 1983. A year earlier, calm as ever in a crisis, he rescued his wife from their blazing car after a collision, despite his own severe burns. She, their son and two daughters survive him.

Dan Van Der Wat
Hugh Stirling Mackenzie, submarine officer, born July 3, 1913; died October 10, 1996

Mary Tuck

A taste for justice

MARY TUCK, who has died aged 68, was the former head of the Home Office Research and Planning Unit for 13 years. During that time - in the later part of a long and varied career - she influenced the direction of criminological thinking, played a major part in shaping public policy on crime, and inspired all those who worked with her.

Early intellectual curiosity led her to study for a further degree (following her open scholarship to St Anne's, Oxford) to read English in social psychology at the London School of Economics. There she was inspired by Martin Fishbein with whom she formed a lifelong friendship. Her book *How Do We Choose* drew upon Fishbein's work on attitudes, rationality and choice and is an early example of her ability to communicate complex intellectual ideas to a wider audience.

This skill was important when she joined the Home Office Research and Planning Unit (RPU) in 1976. The purpose of the RPU is to provide an impartial and objective empirical base for the development of policy, but as one of her predecessors wrote many years before: "to preserve scientific integrity while acting as a servant of the Secretary of State has never been easy".

Coming from a career in "communications", Tuck brought fresh insights in how research could be effectively conveyed in public debate and how findings, frequently unpalatable to ministers, could be used constructively, in policy formation.

She could make complex ideas or sophisticated statistical analysis intelligible. She loved literature and would often clarify a point by relating it to a scene, a plot or a character in a novel.

To portray her as merely a brilliant communicator would not do her justice. She developed the discipline of criminology in many important ways, most significantly by emphasising the importance of community in understanding crime and in shaping effective crime prevention strategies. At this time the findings of the new British Crime Survey were graphically illustrating how certain types of communities were disproportionately affected by crime. (It was also a time when Mrs Thatcher was stating that "there is no such thing as society".)

For Tuck the importance of community was real, not just theoretical. Away from the public eye she was very active in her local community in west London. For many years she served as a member of the West London Catholic Education Committee. She established the Mangrove Trust to raise money to save the West Indian community centre of the same name and supported the Notting Hill Carnival.

She was born into a Catholic family and brought up in what she described as "Carnation Street" neighbourhood in St Helens, Lancashire.

Robert O'Neill Crossman, politician, born March 7, 1947; died October 21, 1996



Tuck... care and concern

After Oxford, she spent a year teaching at the University of Pittsburgh before working for two years at the Government Communication Headquarters.

She switched careers to become a journalist at Vogue, where she edited the Vogue Beauty Book. Journalism led to copywriting for various advertising agencies and to market research. During this period she married Robin and brought up her family of four children.

Although she would have had reservations about the label "feminist" she was greatly concerned about the position of women in society and wrote several articles on the topic. She was later to urge female staff never to accept that it was not possible to have a family and get to the top. She also wrote her first book *The Intelligent Woman's Guide to Good Taste*.

Tuck retired from the Home Office in 1989 but never retired from public life. She was an assessor to Lord Justice Woolf's enquiry into the prison disturbances of 1990. Her profound sense of fairness and personal integrity meant that she saw no contradiction in being a member of the Parole Board at the same time as being National Chair of Victim Support.

She continued to promote social research following her appointment to the council of the Economic and Social Research Council. Committed to raising awareness and the standard of debate of crime and criminal justice, she wrote and lectured on the subject and frequently appeared on radio and television. She recently joined the Council of the British Society of Criminology which she wanted to promote as an authoritative and impartial voice on such issues.

Through her energy, inspiration and charisma, she enriched the lives of all who came into contact with her. She was open and frank, but above all had a wonderful sense of humour, with the ability to defuse a potentially difficult situation with a joke at her own expense.

She will be remembered by those who worked with her with genuine and deep affection at the personal level and enduring respect for her professionalism.

Roger Tarking
Mary Tuck, social researcher and civil servant, born May 25, 1928; died October 20, 1996

Robert Crossman

Gay pride of the mayor

ROBERT Crossman, who has died of cancer aged 49, was a lifelong Labour Party activist and a leader in the gay community and men's movement. Above all he was a tireless fighter against injustice and discrimination. He brought to all these activities what the author Tom Wakefield described as his "great histrionic ability" - a term Crossman loved.

He was committed to using politics as a vehicle for making real change. At 15 he faked his age to join the Labour Party and was an active member for more than 30 years, becoming a local

councillor in Altrincham in the 1970s. Following a period at Manchester Polytechnic as a mature student, he moved to London where he represented the Islington wards of Highview, Gillespie and Elgbury for more than 12 years from 1982.

As a councillor he fought passionately for the development of education services and represented Islington on the Inner London Education Authority in the mid-1980s. Indeed, it was his decision to vote against cuts in Islington's under-fives daycare which almost lost him the Labour whip in 1984.

In 1988 he became mayor, a

role in which he could do one of the things he enjoyed most: celebrating the achievements of others. As a gay mayor who came out, Crossman became an important role model for many gay men as he took on his public office with delight, vigour and pride.

As a founder and chairman of the Islington lesbian and gay committee he constantly sought creative ways to involve lesbians and gay men more actively in local government, often taking meetings outside the town hall to make them more accessible. He had a thriving career in organisational development, working with local councils, Age Con-



Crossman... tireless fighter

cern, the National Association of Citizens' Advice Bureaux and many HIV-related organisations. He celebrated his and others' sexuality with a passion and was a committed member of many organisations, including London Lesbian and Gay Switchboard,

Gay Man Fighting AIDS, the National Aids Helpline and Food Chain, for whom he was a regular driver.

One of his most profound achievements was his work with men and his recognition of their resources of loving strength. Through workshops, groups and friendships he gave men the skills and confidence to achieve their caring potential, challenging many of the stereotypes we experience. He enjoyed his masculinity while committing himself to challenging all oppression. Hundreds of men's lives have been radically changed as a result of meeting him.

Diagnosed with bowel cancer in 1994, he characteristically took this on as a challenge to overcome. As a Sister of Perpetual Indulgence he changed his title to Mother "Kiss My Arse Goodbye" - reflecting the acceptance of

his diagnosis with both humour and strength.

He always believed in treating himself well and insisted on taking a holiday in Australia in 1995, prescribing himself the Gay Mardi Gras. At the beginning of 1996, not being able to find a cancer support group for men, he immediately established a network for men with cancer. He kept a Che Guevara quote posted up in his home to remind himself of his true drive in every aspect of his life: "Let me say, at the risk of seeming ridiculous, that the true revolutionary is guided by great feelings of love."

Robert O'Neill Crossman was just such a revolutionary and an inspiration to many.

Paul Devlin
Robert O'Neill Crossman, politician, born March 7, 1947; died October 21, 1996

Jack Tinker

A shining star in the stalls

JACK TINKER, who has died aged 58, had been drama critic of the Daily Mail since 1971. He was also a columnist, broadcaster, author and a performer in the great American tradition of Alexander Woollcott: he had only just returned from presenting his own anecdotal one-man show, *An Evening With Jack Tinker*, aboard the QE2. But above all, he was a great lover whose very presence lit up a room.

He was born in Oldham, educated at Hulme Grammar School for Boys and entered journalism in 1957 as a general reporter on the Surrey Advertiser. But it was as theatre and film critic of the Brighton Evening Argus from

1961 to 1969 that he made his name. Reports would filter back from actors on pre-West End tours of a remarkable local critic. Indeed one of Tinker's favourite stories, told against himself, was of Ralph Richardson encountering him in later life and crying, in plaintive tones: "When I read you in Brighton, you were a poet. Whatever happened?"

What happened was that he became drama critic of the Daily Mail, following in the footsteps of Bernard Levin and Peter Lewis. Poetry would have been out of place. Tinker's great gift as a critic was that he wrote about theatre with enormous zest, knowledge and enthusiasm in a manner that appealed both to

the cognoscenti and to the Mail's wide readership. His overnight reviews were given an enormous splash on page three. Lately he also wrote an excellent theatre roundup and a characteristically witty personal column.

Robert Robinson dubbed drama critics "anonymous men who catch the last bus back to Maxwell Hill". You could never say that of Jack. He was a natural performer who actually enjoyed a share of the limelight. He was a snappy dresser who liked to appear at a first night in the appropriate gear: he once turned up at Shakespeare's *Mistaken-Identity* play *The Comedy of Errors* with his own lookalike, Wayne Sleep, clad in identical clothes. One of my

fondest memories is also of appearing with him on the first British charity television where critics performed a parody of him drinking his colleagues under the table in Stratford, Ontario, and of keeping dinner-tables in Perth and Sydney in a roar with accounts of his first hazardous trip to Australia (the bad, uncharacteristically, turned up at Heathrow without a visa). But behind the love of fun there was also a serious side. He was a tireless worker for charity, a man of discerning



Tinker... natural extrovert

taste and a first-rate journalist who took pride in his versatility - something appreciated by the Mail, which sent him to cover events as diverse as the Labour Party's Sheffield Gala and boxing in America.

As a critic, he was not afraid to mingle with the stars. He was one himself and shared the likes of Maggie Smith - of whom he had once written an excoriating notice, later forgiven - Robert Stephens, Elton John

and Michael Barrymore. But, when he put pen to paper, he was fiercely independent. He also had the great capacity to make the theatre sound an exciting place to be and to write about it with crisp intelligence, for a mass audience.

His personal life was shadowed by tragedy: he was haunted by the death of one of his three dearly-loved daughters. But he took great pride in being a grandfather, enjoyed to the hilt his dual residence of London and Brighton, found time to write a number of books, including one on *The TV Barons* and another on *Coronation Street*, and never wrote a dull sentence in his life. Not only will the dramatic world of criticism be a much poorer place without him, the theatre itself will mourn his passing and his countless readers will feel that they too have lost a valued friend.

Michael Billington
Jack Tinker, critic, born February 15, 1938; died October 28, 1996

Jackdaw



Frog revenge

TWO local men were seriously injured when their pick-up truck left the road and struck a tree near Cotton Patch on State Highway 38 early Monday morning. Woodbury County Deputy Dave Snyder reported the accident shortly after midnight Monday. Thurston Poole, 33, of Des Arc and Billy Ray Wallis, 38, of Little Rock are listed in serious condition at Baptist Medical Center. The accident occurred as the two men were returning to Des Arc after a frog gigging (catching frogs) on an overcast Sunday night. Poole's pick-up truck

headlights malfunctioned. The two men concluded that the headlight fuse on the older model truck had burned out. As a replacement fuse was not available, Wallis noticed that the .22 calibre bullet from his pistol fitted perfectly into the fuse box next to the steering wheel column. Upon inserting the bullet, the headlights again began to operate properly and the two men proceeded on east-bound toward the White River Bridge. After travelling approximately 20 miles and just before the bridge, the bullet apparently overheated, discharged and struck Poole in the right testicle.

The vehicle swerved sharply to the right exciting the pavement and striking the tree. Poole suffered only minor cuts and abrasions from the accident, but will require surgery to repair the other wound. Wallis sustained a broken clavicle and was treated and released. "Thank God we weren't on that bridge when Thurston shot his nuts off or we might have been dead," stated Wallis.

From the Arkansas Democrat & Gazette, July 25.

Nerd man

I GET about 100 e-mail messages a day from readers of my comic strip "Dilbert" and a growing number are from women who write to say they think Dilbert is sexy. Some say they've already married a Dilbert and couldn't be happier. If you're not familiar with Dilbert, he's an electrical engineer who spends most of his time with his computer. He's a nice guy but not exactly Kevin Costner. So what's the attraction? I think it's a Darwinian thing. We're attracted to the people who have the best ability to survive and thrive. In the old days it was important to be able to run down an antelope and kill it with a single blow to the forehead. Now all that matters is if you can install your own Ethernet card without having to call tech support and confess your inadequacies to a stranger whose best career option is to work in tech support. It's obvious that the world has three dis-

tinct classes of people, each with its own evolutionary destiny: 1. Knowledgeable computer users who will evolve into godlike non-corporate beings who rule the universe (except for the ones who work in tech support). 2. Computer owners who try to pass as knowledgeable but secretly use hand calculators to add totals to their Excel spreadsheets. This group will gravitate toward jobs as high school principals and operators of pet crematoriums. They will become extinct. 3. Non-computer users who will grow tails, sit in zoos, and fling dung at tourists.

Obviously, if you're a woman and you're trying to decide which evolutionary track you want your offspring to take, you don't want to put them on the huge ride to the dung-throwing Olympics. You want a real man. You want a knowledgeable computer user with evolution potential. And women prefer men who listen. Computer users are excellent listeners because they can look at you for long periods of time without saying anything. Granted, early in a

relationship it's better if the guy actually talks. Finally, there's the issue of mood lighting. Nothing looks sexier than a man in boxer shorts illuminated only by a 15-inch SVGA monitor. If we agree that this is every woman's dream scenario, then I think we can also agree that it's best if the guy knows how to use the computer. Scott Adams, cartoonist, trying very hard to convince us that computers are the new symbols of the nineties. Discovered on the humour listserv. Thanks to Paul Oldham.

Funny thing

LAUGH yourself fighting fit: Researchers at Loma Linda University in California have discovered that laughter may positively affect the immune system. Laugh yourself stress-free: Researchers have found levels of immunoglobulin A, an antibody secreted in the saliva that helps protect the body against respiratory invaders, drop markedly when people get stressed. But this drop is far less dramatic for those

who score high on the sense-of-humor scale. Laugh yourself to a longer life: Studies indicate laughter may increase longevity. But comedians don't live longer than anyone else, suggesting that when it comes to health, what counts is not so much a talent to make others laugh, as the ability to keep yourself happy and amused. Laugh yourself happy: Humour has demonstrable psy-



Zest... laughter lines

Birthdays

Douglas Cameron, radio presenter, 63; George Davies, entrepreneur, founder of Next, 55; Angela Douglas, actress, 46; Richard Dreyfuss, actor, 42; Lady (Joyce) Gould, former director of organization, Labour Party, 64; David Grindley, athlete, 64; Robert Hardy, actor, 71; Michael Jayston, actor, 61; R B Kitaj, artist, 64; Janet Trotter, college principal, 53; Jon Vickers, operatic tenor, 70; Galen Weston, tycoon, vice-chairman, Fortnum and Mason, 56.

Death Notices

CHANCELLOR, Sylvia Mary, on October 28, 1996, aged 87, after a long illness, at St. James's, Shillingford, Dorset. Burial at St. James's Church, Plymouth, Devon, on Friday November 1, 1996.

Memorial Services

FRANK - A memorial service for Paul Frank will be held on Monday, November 11, at 11.00am, at St. James's Church, Plymouth, Devon. All welcome.

Births

HOWARD, Johanna Elizabeth, in Brimsley, on October 28, 1996, to her mother, A. Mervyn and her father, M. J. Howard.

HTO place your announcement telephone 0171 713 4667. Fax 0171 713 4123.

White skeleton

IN A shocking blunder, the White House successfully put pressure on Hotwired Magazine to stop linking President Clinton's name to this very web page. This was all done behind the scenes - we had no idea until we read Brock Meek's Netizen column of April 30. The White House official involved, David Lytel, was in charge of creating

the popular Clinton White House web site. He recently left the White House, and is working for a private web page consultant. At a conference, he attacked Netizen for being cynical and unfair, citing the Skeleton Closet link. Meeks, in response, noted that Hotwired had removed the link after receiving official pressure from the White House. In Hotwired's "Threads" discussion, another Hotwired employee admitted that they had been "intimidated" by receiving email from the "whitehouse.gov" domain early in Netizen's infancy, and said she regretted that they caved in. Feeling the pressure, extract from Skeleton Closet, a web site that digs up all the dirt on Presidential candidates. Posted at www.reachchange.org/index.htm

Jackdaw wants jewels. E-mail jackdaw@guardian.co.uk; fax 0171-713-4366; Jackdaw, The Guardian, 119 Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3ER.

Emily Sheffield

Financial Editor: Alex Brummer
Telephone: 0171-239-9610
Fax: 0171-833-4456

Finance Guardian

Governor fights for rate rise

Larry Elliott and Mark Milner

THE Bank of England will shrug off the pound's recent rapid rise and renew its call for an immediate increase in interest rates when the governor, Eddie George, meets the Chancellor, Kenneth Clarke, tomorrow.

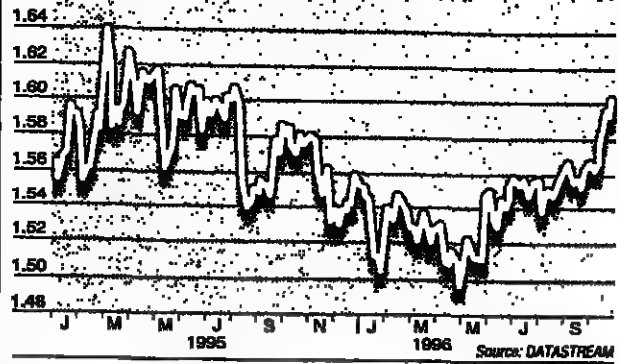
Despite the beneficial impact of sterling's strength on inflation, the Bank remains worried that without a timely rise in rates the authorities could be forced into more drastic action at a later stage. The meeting, the latest in the monthly series between the two men, is being seen as the most important since May 1995, when Mr Clarke rejected the Bank's advice to increase borrowing costs.

Some analysts suggest that the meeting might even be the last chance for the Bank to change the Chancellor's mind before the next election. Tomorrow's meeting is the last before the Budget on November 26 and a subsequent rise, in the run-up to Christmas, is deemed unlikely. The next opportunity would be early in the new year, by which time electioneering would be underway in earnest, making a rate rise politically risky.

Yesterday the pound closed at \$1.6111 and DM2.4460, pushing the Bank of England's trade weighted index, which measures the pound's strength against a basket of currencies, to 89.6 - its highest for nearly two years.

Sterling's recent resilience - it shrugged off a fall to DM 2.41 last week to rebound to current levels - makes it

US dollar against pound



easier for the Chancellor to resist the Bank. Mr Clarke is already starting to receive letters from big UK exporters complaining about the adverse effect of the strength of the pound on their overseas

business. A dearer pound makes exports more expensive but also makes imports cheaper, helping to keep inflation down. In the last set of published minutes recording the meeting between Chancellor and governor in September Mr George urged a small increase in base rates, warning of the dangers in delaying. The Bank will argue that the pound's performance has to be set against indications of mounting inflationary pressure - the pick up in growth, the upbeat surveys from the Confederation of British Industry and the Association of British Chambers of Commerce, rising house prices and strong consumer demand.

The Chancellor is likely to argue that the strength of sterling reflects the underlying health of the UK economy and will make it easier for the Government to deliver both growth and low inflation. Mr Clarke will use a Commons debate tomorrow afternoon to insist that Britain's economic prospects are better now than

at any time for the last 40 years.

Mr Clarke has already indicated a relatively tight budgetary package and will therefore take some persuading to tighten monetary policy.

Roger Bootle, chief economist at HSBC Greenwell, said: "The markets would see even a small rise in rates as the start of a trend. They would think that higher inflation is on the way and long rates would probably go up rather than down. There could be quite a considerable impact on confidence."

The pound's rise may also have been fuelled by events unrelated to the UK economy. "Sterling is being seen as something of a safe haven, somewhere to park your money while you work out what to do in other markets," according to Tony Norfield, at ABN AMRO in London.

Notebook

Omaha's shadow falls on Northern



Edited by Mark Milner

THE ink has scarcely dried on Trade and Industry minister Ian Lang's decision to block the rival bids for South West Water that the utilities sector is on an all-out bid.

Not for the first time, the impetus has come from the United States. CalEnergy from Omaha, Nebraska, has come out with a \$766 million bid for Northern Electric, once owned but not won by Trafalgar House.

For the companies, the issue appears only one of price - though industry regulator Ofwat might yet have a word to say.

CalEnergy is offering 830p a share. Northern reckons its shareholders should get £7.00 a pop. The market is going for something in between - though quite a tranche of Northern shareholders have already voted with their feet, allowing CalEnergy to buy almost 13 per cent of its target through the market.

On one hand, the price CalEnergy is putting forward might be thought cheap. It amounts to around 10 times earnings, compared with the up to 14-times earnings paid for others in the sector.

On the other hand, Northern has a pretty hefty debt level and, as CalEnergy has not been slow to remind investors, the sector is likely to face a windfall tax if Labour wins the next election.

Shadow Chancellor Gordon Brown may feel flattered that the folks from Omaha reckon the sector can take a windfall tax and still be worth buying, but CalEnergy are unlikely to have overlooked the fact that, in the short run at least, it is also a handy way of keeping the price down.

But while the City licks its lips over another profitable bid battle, the shadow of uncertainty again looms over the utilities sector. If Northern falls it will become the eighth (but doubtless not the last) regional electricity company to have been taken over since privatisation. Only four have not changed hands. Market forces are one thing, instability another.

Telecoms target

TELECOM companies are expecting easy pickings in Germany as Deutsche Telekom struggles to adapt to a competitive market. Deutsche Telekom's chief executive Ron Sommer disagrees.

Dr Sommer, in London yesterday for one of the privatisation roadshows, reckons his company is fitter and leaner than it was, for example, six years ago. The group has nearly completed the costly modernisation of its network, already faced competition in 25 per cent of its

business and has rebalanced its tariffs. Indeed, such has been its success that would-be rivals, such as British Telecom, are already running off to the regulator or the authorities in Brussels for help.

Dr Sommer dismisses arguments that the group is overmanned and will have difficulty reducing its workforce. It already has a deal to cut the workforce to 170,000 by the year 2000. From then on he said later, the best way of delivering shareholder value will probably involve more rather than fewer jobs.

Such a view makes a refreshing change for those to whom the words shareholder value translate directly into job losses. Nonetheless, the task ahead is likely to be as tough, if not tougher, than that already completed. The telecom industry is changing rapidly, and few are confident about its likely structure by the millennium. Last week showed just how quickly things can change. Cable & Wireless, seemingly down and out after failing to merge with BT, transformed itself with a bold and unexpected deal with leading UK cable companies.

Dr Sommer takes pride in Deutsche Telekom as the world's largest full-service telecom company, offering everything from telephone services to cable entertainment. There are no guarantees, however, that in a fast-moving industry full service will be the right model for the future.

State sell-offs

INTERNATIONAL investors are expected to buy around a third of the shares in next month's Deutsche Telekom privatisation. The exercise will cost them around DM6 billion. Buying the marks to fund their Telekom purchases should be absorbed readily enough by the foreign exchanges, where the mark is heavily traded.

But Germany is not the only country selling off substantial tranches of the state-owned sector. In some cases, such sales will be very helpful in making their respective budgetary sums add up to the totals laid down in the Maastricht treaty as those needed for monetary union.

The snag for some countries is that foreign investors are expected to buy around a third of the shares in next month's Deutsche Telekom privatisation. The exercise will cost them around DM6 billion. Buying the marks to fund their Telekom purchases should be absorbed readily enough by the foreign exchanges, where the mark is heavily traded.

Injuries index

FORGET profits, price earnings and free cash flows. New financial measures are needed, such as an injury index. It is no joke. Manchester United's recent slump in form has been mirrored by the shares and left investors anxious for news of Gary Pallister's back or Nicky Butt's knee.

Gates unveils plans for cheaper PCs

Mark Tran in New York

MICROSOFT, the computer software group, moved aggressively yesterday to thwart the challenge posed by cheap computing devices known as network computers, by unveiling plans for an inexpensive and more user-friendly personal computer.

The move marked the latest U-turn by Bill Gates, the chairman of Microsoft, who had previously underestimated the threat posed by the Internet. Only a year ago, Microsoft dismissed network computers (NCs) as "dumb terminals" and the " silliest idea since the stand-alone word processor".

But the NC concept is winning big-name advocates such as IBM and Compaq, which have committed themselves to making NC-type products for less than \$1,000 (£620), about half the current price of PCs. The NC's biggest selling point is simplicity, whereas the PC is expensive and

overloaded with features and programs that can make it frustrating to use. An NC has scant storage and memory; a stripped-down machine, it retrieves software from the Internet or from other computer networks.

The NC looms as a dangerous threat to Microsoft because, since Apple's Macintosh faded, it is the first clear, widely supported alternative to the "Wintel"-standard PCs based on Windows software and Intel chips.

Lawrence Ellison, chairman of data-base software company Oracle, believes that by 2000 more NCs will be sold than PCs. Oracle and Netscape, the Internet browser company, yesterday announced an alliance in which Netscape products will be bundled with NCs based on an Oracle operating system.

In response to the growing NC challenge, Microsoft is proposing a general technical definition for the new machines, known as a reference platform.



Argentina must wait for share in Falkland oil

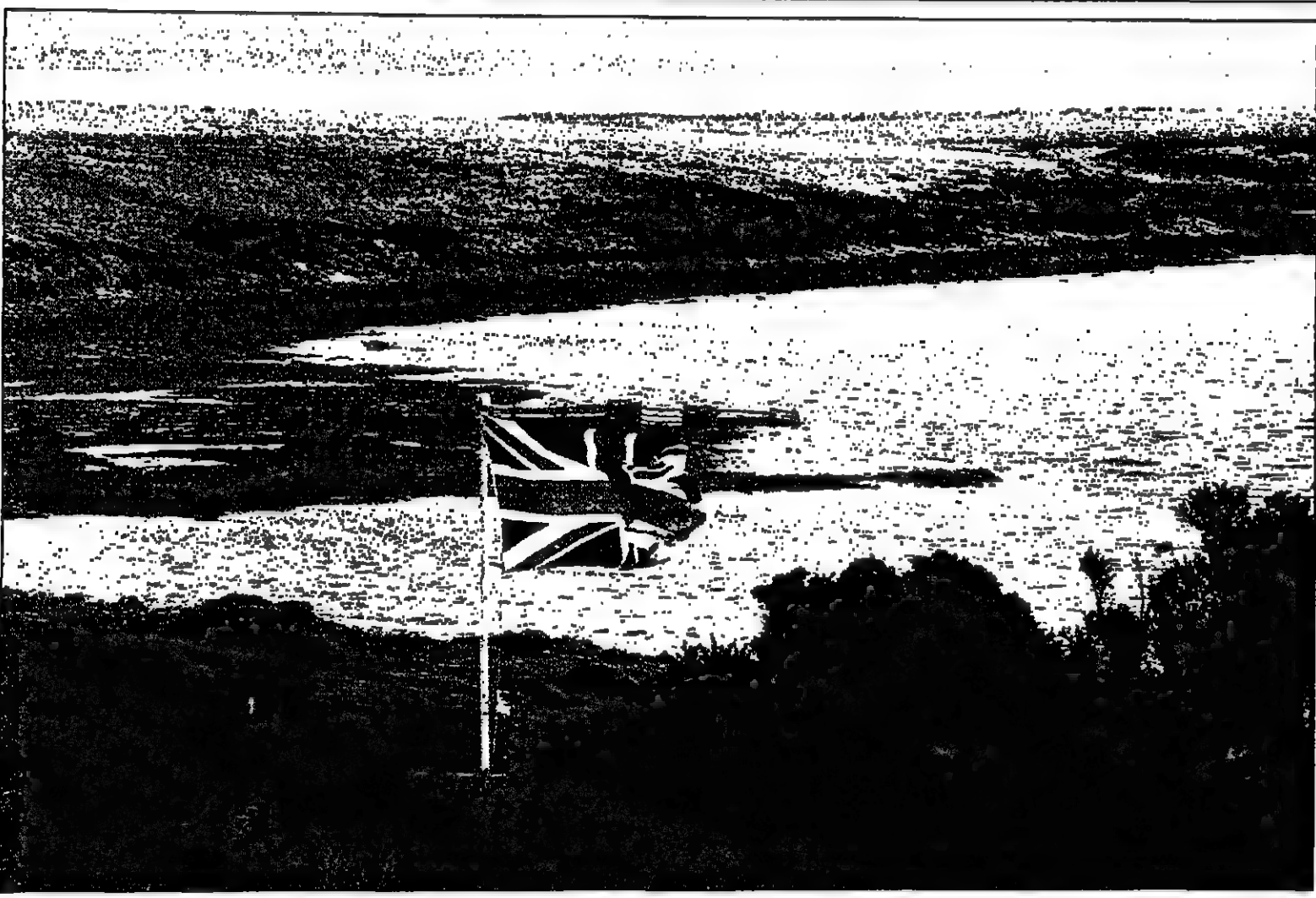
David Fairhead

ARGINTINA failed yesterday to win a licence to explore for oil off the Falklands and will have to wait at least another two years before it can claim a share in an area geologists believe could rival the North Sea.

The race to exploit what geologists believe could be the world's next oil bonanza began yesterday when the first licences were awarded to consortia led by Amerada Hess, Shell and Lasmo.

The Argentinian company YPF, widely expected to win one of the exploration and production licences in partnership with British Gas, was squeezed out on "commercial" grounds. It was the only bidder to be excluded from the licence round.

"We would have liked YPF to be involved because it has



Islands in the stream... resources off Falklands could rival North Sea oilfields but Argentina's licence to drill has been deferred. PHOTOGRAPH: MURDO MACLEOD

so much to offer politically," said Andrew Gurr, chief executive of the Falkland Islands government, "but commercially, it was not sufficiently attractive."

Unless the Argentinian company can buy into one of the successful consortia, therefore, it must now wait until 1998, when licences will probably be issued for the

"Area of Special Co-operation" established last year by a joint inter-governmental declaration from London and Buenos Aires.

Mr Gurr described yesterday's awards as "probably the biggest single step in the islands' history since January 14, 1982", when the invading Argentinian forces surrendered. But he feared the 2,300

islanders faced problems whatever the exploratory wells produced. "If oil was not found in commercial quantities, their hopes of a financial bonanza would be dashed... If there were large reserves, vast new wealth would somehow have to be distributed without destroying their way of life."

The successful firms were: Amerada Hess (Falkland Islands) Ltd; Fina Exploration Atlantic BV; Murphy South Atlantic Oil Company; Tetokoku Oil Co Ltd; Argos Evergreen Ltd; Shell Exploration BV; Agip Exploration BV; Lasmo International Ltd; Clyde Expro; Desire Petroleum Ltd; International Petroleum Corporation; and Sands Petroleum AB.

Detailed seismic investigation will begin almost immediately in seven areas allocated to the north of the islands, where the sea is relatively shallow at 100 to 200 metres.

The first wells should be drilled by the end of next year, depending on the availability of specialised semi-submersible rigs.

Alliance offers flat-rate £1,000 float windfall

Richard Miles

ABOUT 2.4 million Alliance & Leicester members will each receive 250 shares worth about £1,000 when Britain's fourth-biggest building society floats on the stock market next year.

Savers and borrowers will be eligible for the free shares, estimated to be worth between 36p and 48p each, provided that they have held an account since December 31 last year and had at least £100 in a share account on October 14 this year or have an outstanding mortgage debt of at least £100, the society said.

Members with both a mortgage and savings account will qualify for two lots of shares.

Alliance & Leicester has scheduled its flotation for the second quarter of next year, when the Halifax and Woolwich also plan to convert to banks. The terms of yesterday's share offer put a market value of £2.4 billion-£2.8 billion on the society.

Chairman Simon Everard said conversion to plc status was the "best way for our

members to unlock the value of their membership and for our customers to benefit from a broader range of high-quality personal financial services into the next century."

But Alliance & Leicester's decision to allocate an equal number of shares to all members is likely to upset some longer-term savers. In most earlier conversions, handouts were linked to the size and term of a saver's account.

A spokesman said the society had decided on a flat payment - even though this means "carpet-baggers" will receive the same reward as a member who has been with Alliance & Leicester for 20 years.

He said wealthier savers were "generally rewarded by a higher rate of interest on their accounts". Members will be asked for their approval of the conversion plans at a meeting at the London Arena on December 10. Alliance & Leicester needs a 75 per cent majority from at least 20 per cent of savers and a simple majority from borrowers to go ahead with the float. A complementary postal ballot closes on December 5.

Taxman 'went on casino spree'

Tony May

AHARD-UP tax inspector's lifestyle soared to extravagant spending on cars, entertainment and hotels after he allegedly started accepting bribes from wealthy businessmen he was investigating, the Old Bailey was told yesterday.

Michael Alcock was also given pocket money to spend during a night out at a Monte Carlo casino by a Lebanese businessman who owed Britain thousands of pounds in taxes, according to John Black, prosecuting.

Mr Alcock was in charge of a special office at the Inland Revenue, dubbed "The Ghost-busters", whose role was to rake in taxes owed by "individuals of extreme wealth".

But he was corrupted, "by the huge wealth he saw before him", it is alleged. "Evidence of his high living will come from a number of his former colleagues," Mr Black told the jury. One said that in the mid-eighties Mr Alcock seemed hard up, lived in a modest house and drove an older car.

"But then in 1987-1988 he seemed to have more money. He changed his car for a better model, bought a second one and had a lot of work done on his house."

"He bought wine at £10 to £16 a bottle and threw large parties."

By 1989 Mr Alcock had acquired a second-hand Jaguar and sent his son to a private school. Other colleagues noticed Mr Alcock spent a lot on holidays, clothes and entertaining.

Mr Alcock implied he had received money from an aunt and his father, the court heard.

He was in charge of a special investigation into Marwan Kalo, who had invested in the eighties in the bottled mineral water Highland Spring, Mr Black said.

But on Mr Alcock's orders, he alleged, "at the stroke of a pen", £300,000 of remittances

from abroad that the Revenue wanted to investigate were written off.

Mr Alcock then allegedly agreed a £50,000 settlement with Kalo's representatives in London, but suddenly asked if it could be made abroad.

He flew to Nice where, at the expense of Mr Kalo, his hotel bill was paid. He was wine and dined, and taken to a Monte Carlo casino where he and a junior colleague were given about £200 worth of chips, Mr Black said.

Mr Alcock, aged 47, from Colchester, Essex, denies 13 charges of corruption between 1987 and 1992. The case continues.

Germany insists on strict currency rules

Minister threatens to quit EU talks and make separate deal, writes Ian Traynor

GERMANY will quit the European Union negotiations on a single currency "stability pact" unless the deal satisfies its insistence on fiscal rigour and penalties, a senior government official warned yesterday.

Jürgen Stark, the finance ministry number two, said Germany could walk out of the EU negotiations, wait until early 1998, when it is decreed who passes muster for

the single currency club, and then conclude a pact with the "ins", bypassing the EU framework and locking the non-single-currency EU countries out of the decision-making.

"If the stability pact is watered down, the government will halt co-operation," Mr Stark said.

The ultimatum raised the ante in the current brinkmanship over who will qualify for the single currency club and how the club rules will operate after the launch in 1999.

Mr Stark criticised last month's stability pact proposals from the European Commission which diluted German demands and also denounced "creative accounting" in the dash to meet the

single currency terms next year.

A one-off result, possibly due to random events, must not be decisive for single currency qualification," Mr Stark told the Düsseldorf-based business daily, Handelsblatt, in what was seen as a reference to France's intention to fiddle the books to pass the single currency test.

While Mr Stark looked askance at the apparent intention of other EU countries to cook the budgetary books, his boss, Theo Waigel, the finance minister, also stands accused of creative accounting. Chancellor Helmut Kohl's centre-right coalition is best by trench warfare over this year's and next year's budgets, with his small

Liberal partner blaming Mr Waigel for fiscal mismanagement and economising with the truth.

The opposition Social Democrats yesterday demanded an emergency session of parliament on the "financial chaos".

Despite spending cuts that have brought wildcat strikes and street demonstrations, there is still a gap of at least DM3 billion (£1.7 billion) in next year's budget sums.

The budget deficit this year is expected to rise to at least 4 per cent of gross domestic product - well above the single currency ceiling of 3 per cent - although Mr Stark said the deficit would come down to 2.5 per cent next year.

TOURIST RATES - BANK BELLS

Australia 19.66	France 8.01	Italy 2.401	Singapore 2.2
Austria 18.73	Germany 2.58	Malta 0.5876	South Africa 7.25
Belgium 48.95	Greece 378.00	Netherlands 2.87	Spain 200.15
Canada 2.11	Hong Kong 12.12	New Zealand 2.277	Sweden 10.44
Cyprus 0.7170	India 57.18	Norway 10.10	Switzerland 1.966
Denmark 8.18	Ireland 0.9645	Portugal 2.41.00	Turkey 146.713
Finland 7.27	Isoal 5.28	Saudi Arabia 5.99	USA 1.5725

Supplied by NatWest Bank (excluding Indian rupee and Israeli sheqels).

Analysts say target of US firm's £766m offer is likely to seek white knight as takeover fever returns to sector. **Chris Barrie** reports

Northern Electric raider faces battle

TAKEOVER fever reignited yesterday in the electricity industry in the wake of CalEnergy's announcement of a £766 million offer for Northern Electric.

In a dawn raid timed to coincide with the bid announcement, CalEnergy snapped up 12.7 per cent of Northern's shares at about £30p a share. The raid, carried out on behalf of CE Electric UK — the British company formed by CalEnergy for the takeover — forced Northern shares above the offer price of £30p to 55p.

CalEnergy is also offering 103p for each preference share. There is a loan-note alternative.

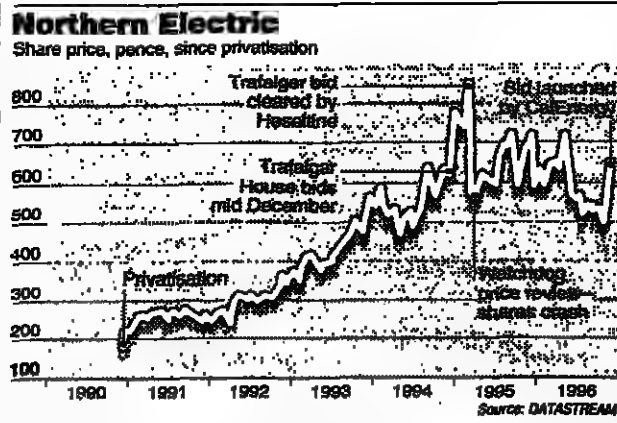
Analysts said the market was expecting CalEnergy to raise its offer, and that Northern may seek a white knight. Other US companies have been reported to be interested in buying UK electricity firms recently.

But one City source also pointed out that the likelihood of the bid being referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission was higher than in the past.

Warning that the market might be overcocky about the bid, he suggested that the industry regulator, Professor Stephen Littlechild, could ask for a referral on the grounds that he is running out of independent electricity companies against which he can make comparisons when assessing costs and profits.

He added: "This is a super-sensitive time politically. Littlechild could give [Trade and Industry Secretary] Ian Lang the excuse he needs to refer the bid."

Offer, the regulatory body, declined to comment, saying that Prof Littlechild's advice to the Office of Fair Trading — which scrutinises bids and



advises the Trade and Industry Secretary — was confidential. There was also surprise in the City that the bidders were relatively small and unknown. Describing CalEnergy and its construction industry partner, Kievit, as "a two men and a dog operation", one analyst said Northern had been selected because it was the cheapest regional electricity company still available.

Friendly society may provide members with cut-price power

FAMILY Assurance, one of Britain's largest friendly societies, said yesterday it was considering supplying electricity to its 600,000 members as it unveiled a tie-up with Northern Electric to help people pay their bills, writes Richard Miles.

Chambers said Family Assurance was ideally placed to offer cheaper electricity because of its buying capacity, administrative and technological expertise, and low operating costs.

"Family believes that mutually should be of direct benefit to its members," Family announced a joint marketing venture with Northern Electric to promote a tax-free investment plan that will allow people to save for future energy bills. Called Energy Reserve, it is based on a personal equity plan.

formation following the company's battle to defend itself against Trafalgar House.

Mr Sokol said CalEnergy had been looking for a UK acquisition for about 18 months to complement its existing overseas businesses in Indonesia and the Philippines.

Northern's expertise in distributing and supplying electricity could be used elsewhere as the global market for electricity becomes deregulated. The power market was five times bigger than that of telecommunications, he added.

Acknowledging that the Northern takeover was the biggest abroad to be undertaken by the group to date, Mr Sokol said \$500 million would come from the group's own funds, with a similar amount being provided from a loan led by Credit Suisse.

Although Northern's job-cutting programme would continue under CalEnergy ownership, 15 per cent of staff are to go in the distribution business by the year 2000 — Mr Sokol painted a picture of long-term growth rather than cost-cutting.

Pledging to keep operational management in place, he said: "Sometimes US people are least able to be sensitive to local cultures." In the Philippines, the company employed six expatriates and 294 locals, he said.

CalEnergy also operates in California, New York and Texas. The construction firm Peter Kiewit Sons owns 33 per cent of the group, and 30 per cent of CE Electric UK.

Analysts said the offer represented much the same value as Trafalgar House's offer in December 1994 of £10.50 a share, once Northern's hefty dividends paid to shareholders since then were taken into account.



David Sokol: emphasising growth prospects on the global market

PHOTOGRAPH: GRAHAM TURNER

House price rises offer no hope to hard core in negative equity

Sarah Ryle and Jill Papworth

HOPES that soaring house prices will kill off the burden of negative equity were dashed yesterday as it emerged that mortgage lending by Britain's major banks slowed last month.

Mortgage lenders admitted that the figures were unexpected, but they dismissed fears of the housing recovery being permanently stalled because prices have been artificially boosted by a shortage of properties on the market.

City analysts believe prices will continue to rise, but that will not be enough to save the hard core of people left with negative equity after the 1990s housing boom.

Figures from the British

Bankers' Association showed overall mortgage lending last month was £2,431 million, 12 per cent down on the August figure.

The seasonally adjusted figures for net lending showed a rise of £417 million in September against £507 million the previous month.

Although new approvals, used as a guide to future lending, were also down by 3.1 per cent in both quantity and value, BBA director general Tim Sweeney said: "It would be a mistake to read too much into a single month's figures."

The Nationwide Building Society Housing Finance Review, published yesterday, showed prices in the three months to the end of September were 9 per cent higher compared with the same period a year ago.

Nationwide said prices would rise by 7 per cent this year, with bigger gains likely in the London and the South-east.

The revival has, in the past nine months, more than halved the number of households with negative equity according to the latest research by UBS.

Some 154,000 households escaped the negative-equity trap during the third quarter of 1996. This leaves 594,000 homes still affected, down from 1,393,000 in the fourth quarter of last year and 1.2 million below the peak of the first quarter of 1993.

The total value of negative equity in the UK fell by £700 million to £2.5 billion in the third quarter.

UBS forecast another one per cent rise in house prices by the end of this year, and a

10 per cent rise in 1997, cutting negative equity to 90,000 households.

The report warned that a cap on the number of mortgage holds at the bottom end of the market will remain in negative equity, regardless of price rises over the next few years. An additional 1.9 million homeowners have insufficient equity — less than 25,000 net equity in their property — to move house.

Its author, Rob Thomas, said: "This segment of the market is still the most sluggish, and many of those affected face the prospect of negative equity for a number of years to come."

2006 forecast says 'no increase in full-time jobs'

Soumas Milne Labour Editor

HALF the extra 1.6 million jobs likely to be created over the next 10 years will come from greater self-employment.

consultants Business Strategies. The next decade will also see a rise of 400,000 in the number of managers, the report says, while clerical jobs will be squeezed by new technology.

Based on a detailed breakdown of sectoral trends and commissioned by the Education and Employment Department, the Business Strategies report

expects total employment to increase from 25.4 million to 27 million.

But it forecasts almost no net increase in full-time jobs, and a drop of only 131,000 in the number of registered unemployed benefit claimants, to 1,890,000, over the next 10 years.

and even doctors," said director Richard Holt.

The report expects an additional 790,000 people to "opt for self-employment" by 2006 — pushed by the security of full-time jobs and the continuing trend to contracting-out.

Of the 770,000 new jobs, 94 per cent are forecast to be part-time, with women expected to account for two-thirds of the growth.

First-time buyers at bottom of market feel brunt

THE HOUSEHOLDERS doomed to stay trapped by negative equity well into the next century are typically first-time home owners who bought "in the wrong regions at the wrong time", writes Jill Papworth.

Worst hit are those who bought properties at the bottom end of the market, such as converted studio and one-bedroom flats, starter homes and ex-council properties, in the south of England during

the late 1980s property boom, according to the UBS report.

First-timers who bought in East Anglia at the peak in the fourth quarter of 1988, for example, paid an average of £83,000 for a home now worth just £44,000. Their property values would have to rise by 43 per cent to release them from negative equity.

These are average figures for the region, so some people, particularly those with smaller flats or cheap

starter homes for which there is now limited demand, are a lot worse off than that," says Rob Thomas.

Smaller properties are hard to sell because the drop in house prices and mortgage rates means that today's generation of first-time buyers can afford two or three bedroom houses. "They don't need to start at the bottom rung," Mr Thomas says. Escape options for severely affected households are few.

Owners can embark on the slow process of saving their way out of negative equity. Depending on the way your lender calculates mortgage interest, the best way to do this can be to increase your monthly repayments.

Some lenders will now help by agreeing to transfer the negative equity shortfall to a second mortgage on a new property for existing borrowers with clean repayment records.

News in brief

Air France's riposte to BA

AIR FRANCE yesterday threatened to thwart British Airways' chances of consolidating its foothold in France by signalling a readiness to buy the troubled domestic airline Air Outre Mer, writes Keith Harper.

Christian Blanc, chairman of Air France, said this would be one way to offset increased competition on French routes if BA succeeds in buying Air Liberté, another ailing French carrier, which has debts of £300 million.

BA and its French subsidiary, TAT, expect a decision tomorrow on whether they have succeeded in their bid for Air Liberté, which has 12 per cent of the French domestic market.

A commercial court will decide whether Air Liberté should be liquidated or referred to outside bidders — which include Richard Branson's Virgin Express as well as BA.

Joining forces with Air Liberté would give TAT 22 per cent of landing slots at Orly airport in Paris, against Air France's 37 per cent.

Banks taken to task

FOUR out of five of the UK's small and medium-sized businesses believe they are getting poor financial advice from their banks, according to a survey published today by accountancy firm Arthur Andersen, writes Pauline Springett.

Richard Young, a partner with Andersen subsidiary Binder Hamlyn, says the high level of dissatisfaction is evidence of an expectation gap between banks and their clients. He explains

that businesses often expect banks to be proactive about giving financial advice, but the banks tend not to consider this part of their normal service.

Jim Redman, a spokesman for the lobby group, the Forum of Private Business, is not surprised by the survey. "There is a willingness on the part of banks to understand their customers," he says, but adds that businesses themselves are partly to blame for the so-called expectation gap.

Murdoch in \$1bn delay

RUPERT MURDOCH'S News Corporation has delayed plans to raise \$1 billion (£620 million) in cash against its 40 per cent holding in BSkyB, writes Lisa Buckingham.

Analysts said the move was to allow the market price of the satellite operator to stabilise and improve after first-quarter figures, to be announced on day.

Shares in BSkyB slumped by 14 per cent to 599p last week after the Murdoch plan to offer exchangeable preference shares in the TV group appeared to signal that the tycoon thought BSkyB's shares had reached a medium-term peak.

The delay will allow BSkyB's price to settle or make some gains — shares rose 5p to 697 1/2p yesterday.

There was a danger that stock market rules might be breached if terms of the \$1 billion convertible issue were announced in the run-up. Although News Corporation has not earmarked the \$1 billion, analysts believe it is destined to bolster the group's digital TV expansion.

Credit card protection stays

THE Government yesterday rejected advice from the Office of Fair Trading to reduce the liability of credit card issuers when reimbursing customers for defective goods or services, writes Lisa Saigol.

Instead it announced that protection to consumers who use credit cards would remain the joint responsibility of the card issuer and the retailer.

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Amount of investment	Minimum guaranteed annual bonus rate*
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£15,000-£24,999.99	8.5%
£5,000-£14,999.99	7.5%

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Soccer

Venerable eyes Blackburn job

Martin Thorpe

TERRY VENABLES is understood to be considering becoming Blackburn Rovers' new manager...

to replace Ray Harford with someone they believe is the best manager for the job after England's success in Euro 96...

Walker is now determined to re-adapt the "money is no object" philosophy that transformed Ewood Park into a super-stadium...

Boro keep hold of Barmby

Mark Redding

NICK BARMBY could be staying at Middlesbrough after the club said yesterday that they had yet to receive an offer for the occasional England striker...

would not threaten the development of Stamford Bridge. "We do have other loans and other shareholders and we are continually talking to people who want to be part of the Chelsea story," he added...

Third Division Leyton Orient, who are 17th in the table, have asked to witness this; a Princess of all our hearts was a little surprising as seconds earlier the Frenchman's critique of English society included a demolition of the Princess's former mother-in-law...



Booyant on the Tyne... 'I'm not unhappy, my wife is not unhappy with life in Newcastle or England,' says David Ginola

Chic radical on Newcastle's left

Michael Walker finds a resurgent David Ginola committed to overturning Ferencvaros's 3-2 lead in tonight's Uefa Cup return leg

IT IS because he is rich, is it because he is handsome or is it because he is an exceptional footballer? Whatever the explanation, everyone wants a piece of David Ginola...

privacy, you have to respect her as a mum with children." Ginola's defence of the Princess of all our hearts was a little surprising as seconds earlier the Frenchman's critique of English society included a demolition of the Princess's former mother-in-law...

different. In Paris I could go shopping with my wife but I can't do that in Newcastle because everywhere I go I have to sign autographs. So my wife has to do everything and that's boring for her. It's easier for me...

don't enjoy it. I thought I was defending too much compared to last year. He understands me and since the Man United game I have felt more comfortable...

That mutual understanding extended to the Barcelona episode during the summer. Barcelona displayed an interest and Ginola responded but the transfer never happened. But, said Ginola, Keegan understood the temptation...

Pallister and Butt likely to miss Fenerbahce return

ALEX FERGUSON's plan for Manchester United's Champions League return with Fenerbahce at Old Trafford tomorrow has been disrupted by worrying knee injuries to Gary Pallister and Nicky Butt...

ably twisted his knee and tweaked the ligaments. We need to give him a couple of weeks off to let it clear up completely but, with an important game coming up like this one, we also need to get him back...

Rangers minus a whole team to face the might of Ajax

IF THERE is such a thing as consolation for a club that has sustained three successive defeats in the Champions League — leaving them pointless and poundless — it is to be found in Rangers' ticket sales for tomorrow's match with Ajax at Ibrox...

With Gascoigne, Gough, Cleland and Moore suspended and McCoist, Durie, McLaren, Goram, Ferguson and McCall unfit — as well as a doubt over the Dutch striker Yussuf Wessén — Smith is perplexed...

He will play the 20-year-old Greg Shields at right-back and the bench will be manned by teenagers such as Steven Soyack, Iain Nicholson, Michael Rae and Scott Wilson...

not have money, and that makes them unequal. "If you respect money you can do great things to help people but we live in a world where people use money the wrong way. In England that is very apparent..."

ING, Ginola's form has blossomed in a more attacking role down the left. His spectacular goal against Manchester United was a defining moment for him...

THE Manchester Storm coach John Lawless voiced his concern at the number of needless penalties his players are taking after the team slid to their second Superleague defeat of the weekend...

Pools Forecast

Table with columns for FA CARLING PREMIERSHIP, NATION LEAGUE, and SECOND DIVISION, listing teams and their predicted outcomes.

Baseball

Table listing baseball fixtures and results, including American Football and Soccer.

Ice Hockey

Table listing ice hockey fixtures and results, including Storm struck by penalties.

Sport in brief

Table listing brief sports news, including Motor Sport and Table Tennis.

Team talk

Table listing football teams and their fixtures for the upcoming week, including Arsenal, Aston Villa, and Blackburn.

Ice Hockey

Table listing ice hockey fixtures and results, including Storm struck by penalties.

Baseball

Table listing baseball fixtures and results, including American Football and Soccer.

Ice Hockey

Table listing ice hockey fixtures and results, including Storm struck by penalties.

Large vertical advertisement on the right side of the page, featuring text like 'England looks like a Shaw' and 'Scots lost'.

Darley loses his Savill rides, page 13

Venables eyes the Blackburn job, page 14

The public face of David Ginola, page 14

Tour abandons Scottish Open, page 15

SportsGuardian



Beating the system... Craig Short, third from left, gets between Nottingham Forest's defenders to head Everton's winner at the City Ground last night. PHOTOGRAPH: MIKE POOLE

Premiership: Nottingham Forest 0, Everton 1

Short sharp shock shatters Forest

David Lacey

A SOGGY evening at the City Ground offered little for the comfort of Nottingham Forest, who fell behind to an early header from Craig Short and were only kept in the game thereafter by Everton's profligacy.

The weekend might have fizzed with incident but last night threatened to be a return of the empties. So far this season neither Forest nor Everton have done a great deal to capture the imagination, attacking sterility being a problem for both sides.

Everton arrived having played only one match in a month, and that a none-too-convincing victory over West Ham. Nevertheless they were winning occasionally, unlike Forest, who were still seeking their first league victory since Campbell's hat-trick at

Coventry on the opening day. Campbell, like Pearce, was still unfit for duty. The postponement of the Merseyside derby nine days earlier because of a waterlogged Anfield pitch had deprived Everton of match practice. Not that it really mattered. Within five minutes Everton were in front as Hinchcliffe's corner, taken on the right and swung in left-footed through the familiar parabola, was met by Short

with a sharp, downward header past Crossley's left hand. While the Forest goalkeeper had done well to push wide a shot from Kanchelskis, his judgment in staying on his line appeared to be at fault when the corner came over. As rain swept the ground the Forest supporters wondered about their judgment in not deciding to stay at home.

Lee soon had a chance to cheer things up for Forest when Lyttle's long, low centre from the right skidded past the last Everton defender as the striker raced in to meet it. But at the crucial moment Lee fell over, and the City Ground sighed anew.

Everton, outnumbering Forest in midfield and often outflanking them on the right, continued to trust in the pace of Kanchelskis and Hinchcliffe's way with corners and free-kicks. This time Haaland, rather than Phillips, filled in for Pearce at left-back but the England defender's absence was still embarrassingly conspicuous.

Midway through the first half Everton should have increased their lead when a slip by Chettle allowed Branch a free run down the right. Stuart was waiting at the far post for a tap-in, but Branch chose to shoot and drove the ball into the side-netting.

Everton nearly rused that just before the half-hour. Short was cautioned for tripping Phillips, who drove the free-kick hard and flat to the far post, where Lee's header was a fraction off target.

With Saunders popping up everywhere, Forest got some momentum into their move-

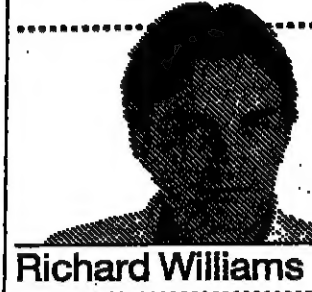
BECKSENTRICS
THE WEIRD AND WONDERFUL WORLD OF EUROPE'S FREE THINKERS

the new millionaires will...
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Maria di...
1970

Felix Fipor, from Frankfurt, had a dream. His dream was to grow the world's largest potato. He gave over his spare bedroom to the task and lovingly tended his crop. "Bigger! Bigger!" he whispered for 15 hours a day, coaxing the vegetable with promises of greatness. But Fritz's triumph was short-lived. The wind plummeted through the ceiling and crushed him to death.

PLAYING BY THEIR OWN RULES

United pride that needed pricking



Richard Williams

UP and down the country yesterday morning small boys went back to school after the half-term holiday to be greeted with a gleeful taunt: "Five-nil... six-three... five-nil... six-three..."

The life of a Manchester United supporter is not all wine and roses, and a good thing too. Most of the time they have it easy enough. But if you choose to support the winners, as tens of thousands throughout Britain do when they give their allegiance to United, then it does you no harm at all to be reminded every now and then that such a choice offers no guarantee of satisfaction, and indeed that if you flirt with hubris you can be sure that it will not be long before Nemesis comes knocking on the door.

Alex Ferguson, as we know, is not a good loser. He greets defeat with a scowl and, if pushed to discuss it further on terms that do not fit his own views, a snarl. On Saturday he left The Dell without talking to the assembled newspaper reporters, which notionally deprived them of his views but in fact probably saved everyone concerned yet another example of his famous red rage.

It has to be said that, if he were any different, Manchester United would probably not have ended their long championship drought before the end of the century, never mind achieving the unique double. And in a sense he has earned the right to his reaction, since he came uncomplainingly through the fire of his difficult early years at Old Trafford before leading the club into the summit uplands represented by a stock-market valuation of getting on for half a billion.

United celebrates two anniversaries next month. On November 6 it will be 10 years since Ferguson arrived at the club. Three weeks later there will be the fourth anniversary of Eric Cantona's sudden transfer from Leeds, the moment which delivered the club from their torment. How fascinating, therefore, that both should be facing perhaps their greatest test in their time at Old Trafford. In terms of results on the pitch, anyway.

Perhaps the long-term success of their partnership has something to do with a shared recognition of similar temperaments, in one respect at least. Both are hard men who bruise easily; this says nothing about their physical or mental courage but it does make life difficult for them and, no doubt, for those around them, too.

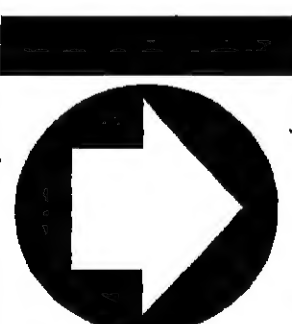
Cantona has come close to being sent off in both United's recent heavy defeats. It seems unlikely that the strategists at Fenerbahce will have let these events pass unnoticed. How much easier the Turkish team's task might be in the Champions League tomorrow night at Old Trafford were the Frenchman to be persuaded to take an early bath. And how potentially depressing would be the consequences of this decline for those of us who defended Cantona after the Selhurst Park affair and who were delighted by the success of his eventual rehabilitation within the English game.

On the other hand, the original defence of Cantona was mounted in the full knowledge of who he is and how he responds to the things that go on around him in a match. It would be unreasonable to expect the events of two years ago to have made any fundamental change in his character, so it is always on the cards that, even if he is never again confronted by a Matthew Simmons, one day there will be another defender who gets on his nerves, just as John Moncur and John Polston did in the pre-Selhurst days.

At least we can assume Cantona has the wit to contemplate the price of another dismissal. Roy Keane is another matter. All his brains are in his boots. Again, Ferguson probably finds himself to some extent in sympathy with a hot-head; but he may value Keane's contribution very highly to put up with a player who still has not learnt the folly of so rancorously disputing a referee's decisions, particularly when he was not involved.

Keane's dismissal against Southampton may have been a shade unlikely, since the second yellow-card offence could have yielded no more than a free-kick, but he brought it on himself and, in so doing, brought the roof down on his team-mates. It will be interesting to see if he goes the way of Paul Ince, another outstanding footballer who was allowed to leave after his unruly passion proved counter-productive.

In the need to resolve this whole little crisis, Ferguson faces a fascinating examination of his own resources and of what he has learnt in the last 10 extraordinary years.

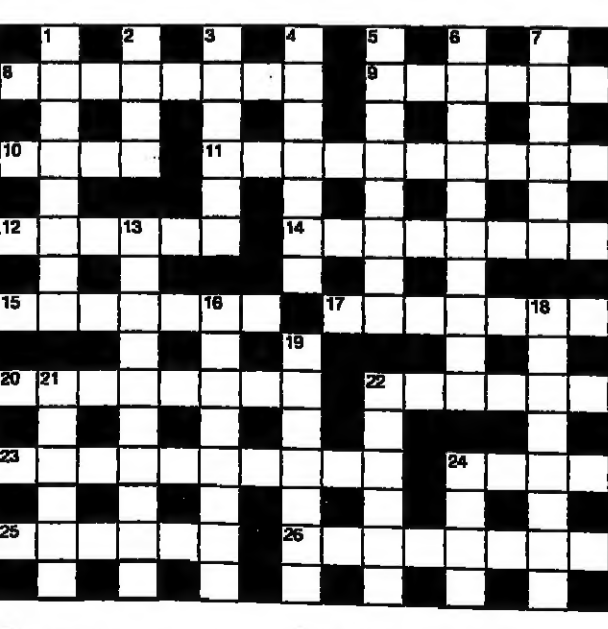


According to Davies's rating scale, out of the 24 winners, only one was less happy after the win than before. This is a useful finding. There is certainly much more common sense on show here among the average winners than the better publicised stories of those who spend, and spend, and spend would have us believe. Laurie Taylor on the 'problems' of winning the lottery

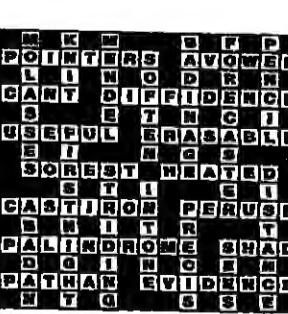
G2 page 4

Guardian Crossword No 20,796

Set by Janus



- Across**
- 8 One with tales to tell about drink (8)
 - 9 German lady's servant (6)
 - 10 Give way on stated issue (4)
 - 11 Novel situation featuring for example academic and politician (5,5)
 - 12 An inferior part of Shakespeare (6)
 - 14 Oriental ball (6)
 - 15 Let go or let out again (7)
 - 17 Stir caused by silver object at exhibition opening (7)
 - 20 Steep camera-angle Lawrence used (6)
 - 22 Statesman with no disposition to flag (6)
 - 23 Study submissions by rivals (10)
 - 24 Chief gets one in person (4)
- Down**
- 1 Did she make writer run away? (8)
 - 2 Spot burrowing animal (4)
 - 3 Master turbulent current (6)
 - 4 Come up with the goods (7)
 - 5 Having ideas about insubstantial ruler? (8)
 - 6 Unconstrained bird or animal of dubious sexuality (10)
 - 7 Where Virgil may have appeared a nutcase to a degree? (6)
 - 13 Entertainers with distracting tale in Egyptian city (3,7)
 - 16 Tools for making bridges? (8)



CROSSWORD SOLUTION 20,796

- 18 Trail cop abandoned as being too hot perhaps (8)
- 19 Sporting substitute for book (7)
- 21 Declaration that sounds like a part of speech (6)
- 22 Instrument one may get for a pound (6)
- 24 Distinguishing characteristic of gospel-writer (4)

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